Historic Styles in Furniture

by

Virginia Robie

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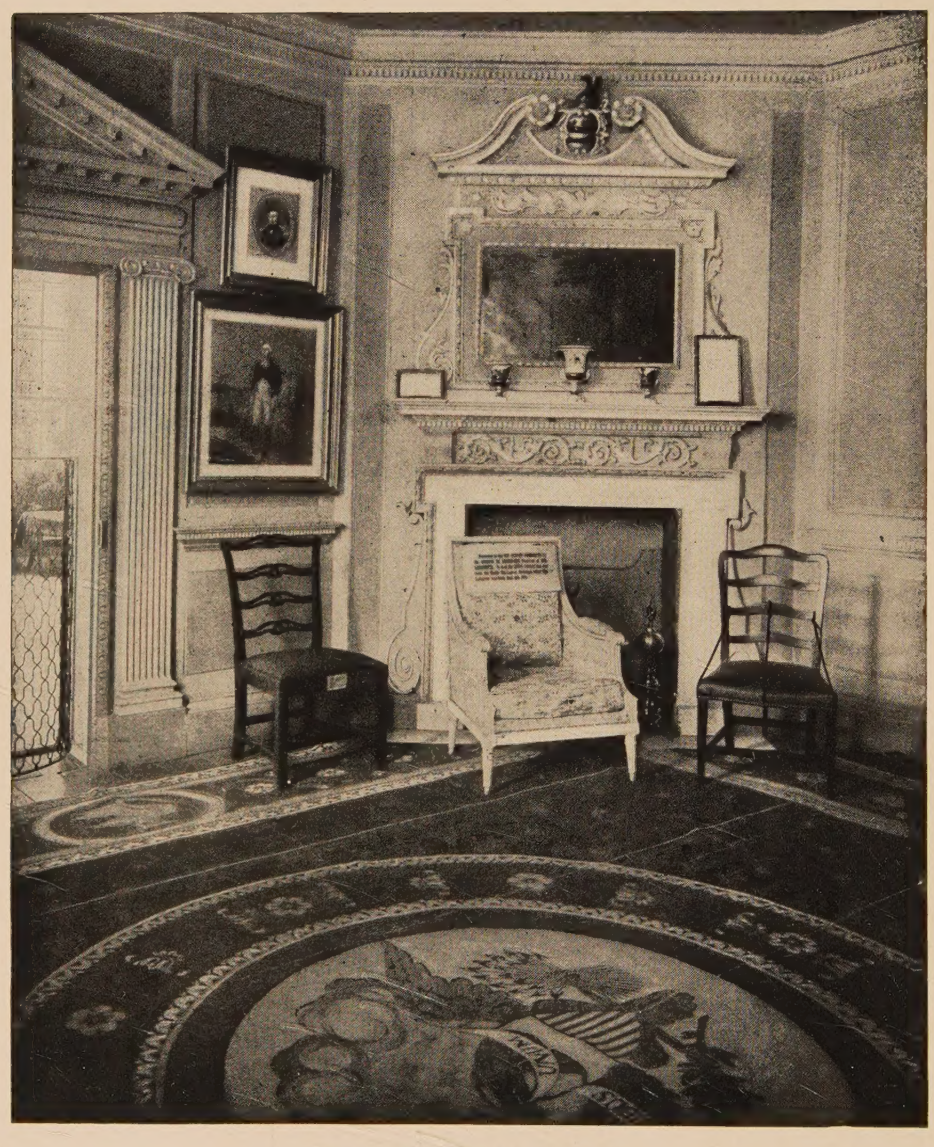

COLONIAL FURNITURE
THE WEST PARLOR — MOUNT VERNON

HISTORIC STYLES IN FURNITURE

By

VIRGINIA ROBIE

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PUBLISHERS' NOTE

This account of "Historic Styles in Furniture" was originally issued ten years ago by the publishers of *The House Beautiful* magazine, mainly for special sale in connection with their publication. It received little exploitation in the general market, and its merits did not, therefore, become widely known. The present publishers have believed that there is a distinct place for this volume, containing, as it does, a bird's-eye view of the development of styles in furniture through ten centuries, and giving the backgrounds and settings an equal importance with the furniture itself.

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CHAPTER I

FURNITURE OF THE MIDDLE AGES

THE HISTORY OF FURNITURE IS SO THOROUGHLY A PART OF THE HISTORY OF THE MANNERS AND CUSTOMS OF DIFFERENT PEOPLES THAT ONE CAN UNDERSTAND AND APPRECIATE THE SEVERAL CHANGES IN STYLE, SOMETIMES GRADUAL AND SOMETIMES RAPID, ONLY BY REFERENCE TO CERTAIN HISTORICAL EVENTS AND INFLUENCES BY WHICH SUCH CHANGES WERE EFFECTED.—FREDERICK LITCHFIELD.

CHAPTER I

FURNITURE OF THE MIDDLE AGES

AS a record of manners and customs the illuminated missal is to the Middle Ages what the sculptured frieze is to ancient Greece and Rome. It represents the earliest history of domestic life of mediæval times. The Egyptians constructed their household furniture in stone, the Greeks and Romans in marble and bronze, and the people of the Middle Ages in wood. Setting aside coronation chairs and choir stalls few pieces of mediæval handicraft are in existence. Without the aid of old manuscripts all domestic furniture made prior to the thirteenth century would be a matter of conjecture. Thanks to these human documents a faithful, if crude, picture is obtained of the life of the times. Furniture is merely a detail in the old drawings; simply an accessory used by the scribe to illustrate a situation. If a royal banquet be the theme, a long, narrow table is suggested; if a coronation ceremony form the subject of the story, a chair of state is rudely indicated; if an interview between a knight and a lady be the main point in the tale, a bench or settle fills the background. Picturesque sidelights on customs and costumes, as well as furniture, are revealed in the old illuminations.

Broadly speaking the period termed the Middle Ages began with the fall of Rome and ended with the capture of Constantinople, but it was the great intermediate stage, roughly spanned by the sixth and tenth centuries, which constituted the dark age of history and art.

The British Museum contains illuminated manuscripts dating back to the ninth century. From these priceless records and from wills of the period the home of the Anglo-Saxon thane has been deciphered. Fragments from many sources have been fitted together and a fairly clear picture has resulted.

The *ham*, or home, contained one large apartment called the *heal* which served as a dining, living, and sleeping room. Adjoining it was the *bower*, or chamber, reserved for the ladies of the household. The hall was sparsely furnished. A board laid upon a trestle formed the dining-table. Benches and stools were the common seats and were used by all members of the family, except the lord and his lady who occupied two rudely constructed chairs. The walls were hung with *walh-rifts*, or wall cloths, which served as a protection from wind and rain. The rafters were covered with a *ceil* cloth, from which our word "ceiling" is derived. In the center of the floor was the hearth, the smoke of the fire escaping through a *louvre*, or opening in the roof. Illumination was provided by torches and by a primitive

lamp of horn, termed a *cresset*. The cresset lamp was a feature in English houses for many centuries and may still be found in rural districts.

The bower contained a straw bed and a *cyst*, or chest. A curtain protected the bed and served to conceal the chest which was the most important article in the house. The chest, or coffer, was a characteristic piece of mediæval handicraft, and the first piece of furniture to express the skill of the wood-carver and the metal-worker. The development of the chest, in its various guises of coffer, hutch, and *bahut*, forms an interesting phase of furniture-making. The cupboard, the dresser, the credence, the cabinet, and the bureau were all evolved from this primitive article. In early Anglo-Saxon times it was a strong box placed near the bed and large enough to hold the family valuables. In an age when one baron waged warfare upon another it was important to have a receptacle always at hand where valuables could be stored, and, if necessary, easily transported.

The homes of the common people of this period lacked the barest comforts. A bench and a chest and a few skins of wild beasts were the household effects of the masses. The bench was crudely constructed and without a back. The chest was of more careful workmanship and served many purposes. It was sometimes used as a seat, sometimes as a table, sometimes as a bed. It was the poor man's chief article of furniture and as such it remained until after the Norman Conquest.

The conditions of Europe were not such as to foster the gentle side of living. Two figures were pre-eminent: the monk and the soldier. One kept art alive; the other nearly exterminated it. Italy, France, and Germany were torn with wars, civil and ecclesiastical, and England, while more remote from the cause of conflict, was also more remote from the centers of civilization. Southern countries still preserved a few classic traditions. In the north they were long since extinct. As England was last to respond to the Renaissance so she was last to develop a mediæval art. At best it was a rude age even in the countries that came in touch with Greek and oriental influences.

With the Norman Conquest came England's awakening to continental methods. With the invasion came French ideas in dress and manners. A more refined mode of living followed. Houses were fitted with the rude comforts which had been known on the continent for nearly a century. Walls received their first decorations. The skins of wild beasts, hung against the rafters to keep out the cold, gave place to pieces of rude tapestry. Fireplaces were fitted with Norman fire-dogs, and the blazing torches were superseded by branches of iron holding tallow candles. In the homes of the feudal lords dishes of metal increased the limited table service of wood and horn.

In *Ivanhoe* a vivid picture is given of Cedric's castle, where French innovations found little favor:

"In a hall, the height of which was greatly disproportioned to its extreme length and width, stood a long oaken table, formed of planks rough hewn from the forest, and which had scarcely received any polish. On the sides of the apartment hung implements of war and of the chase, and there were at each corner doors which gave access to other parts of the extensive building. The other appointments of the mansion partook of the rude simplicity of the Saxon period, which Cedric piqued himself upon maintaining. The floor was composed of earth mixed with lime and trodden into a hard substance. For about one quarter of the length of the apartment the floor was raised by a step, and this space, which was called the daïs, was occupied only by the principal members of the family and visitors of distinction.

AN EARLY EXAMPLE OF GOTHIC FURNITURE AS DEPICTED IN AN OLD ILLUMINATION

"For this purpose a table, richly covered with a scarlet cloth, was placed transversely across the platform, from the middle of which ran the longer and lower board where the domestics and inferior persons sat. Massive chairs were placed upon the daïs, and over these seats and the elevated table was fastened a canopy of cloth which served in some degree to protect the dignitaries who occupied that distinguished station, from the weather, and especially from the rain, which in some places found its way through the ill-constructed roof. The walls of this upper end of the hall, as far as the daïs extended, were covered with hangings or curtains with some attempts at tapestry or embroidery. In the center of the daïs were placed two chairs more elevated than the rest, for the master and mistress of the family. To each of these was added a footstool, curiously carved and inlaid with ivory, which mark of distinction was peculiar to them."

The construction of houses changed little in the century following the Conquest. Norman names were given to various portions of the dwelling, but the general char-

acter remained the same. The *heal* became the *salla* and the *ham* the *manoir*. The greatest innovation was the substitution of a built-in fireplace for the center hearth. In many homes the fire continued to be built in the old way, but where the thickness of the wall permitted the newer method was preferred. The bower, which was formerly built on the ground floor, was elevated to the second story and termed a *soler*, a term supposed to have been derived from the word *sol*. A new room called a *parloir*, or talking-room, was the most important addition to the house.

The arrangement of the bedroom changed little, except that a wooden bed with curtains replaced the bed of straw. Hungerford Pollen in the hand-book of the furniture of South Kensington refers to the bedchambers of this period: "Bedrooms were furnished with ornamental bed-testers and benches at the bed foot. Beds were made with quilts and pillows, and with spotted or striped linen sheets; over all was laid a covering of green sag, badgers' furs, the skins of beavers, or martens. A perch for tame falcons was fixed to the wall. A chair and a projecting pole, on which clothes could be hung, completed the Anglo-Norman bedroom."

The bench was a convenience in receiving visitors. The *soler* was used by the lady of the manor as a sitting-room until the *parloir* became a common feature of house-building. Furniture was more varied after the Conquest and included settles, arm-chairs, and folding seats. Thomas Wright, in treating of this period, states that our word "chair" is Anglo-Norman, and that the Anglo-Saxon term was *setl* or *stol*, the latter being retained in our modern word "stool." *Fadestol* was one name for a chair of state, a word which has been translated in modern French to *fauteuil*, and in English to arm-chair. The Norman table, as depicted in the Bayeux tapestry, is similar to the Saxon trestle design. It was placed in the hall and taken apart after the meal was finished. "Laying the board" was a matter of ceremony. Lines were sharply drawn in regard to the seating of the household. The lord and his lady occupied chairs, the retainers sat upon benches, and those lower in rank remained standing. The placing of the salt was a matter of consideration. "Above salt" or "below salt" indicated the social status of the guests.

Furniture of this age, with the exception of the table, was slightly carved. Chests were the first pieces to receive decorative treatment and chairs came second. In the oldest manuscripts there is a suggestion of ornament in most of the furniture. Much of the decoration is impossible to classify, for it is too archaic to be defined, but a small portion may be assigned to one of the three great styles of the Middle Ages.

Applied ornament during this period may be divided into three classes, Byzantine, Saracenic, and Gothic. The first two had little bearing on furniture-making of the north; the third had a close connection with all handicraft of the times.

FOLDING CHAIR, LATE MIDDLE AGES

Byzantine ornament was based upon geometrical patterns combined with animal and floral forms. Animals were used in a conventionalized manner and were of religious significance. The fish, the serpent, the bird, occur frequently, combined with the circle, the trefoil, and the quatrefoil. The circle was emblematic of Omnipotence, the trefoil of the Trinity, and the quatrefoil of the four evangelists. Byzantine art originated in the fourth century when the Emperor Constantine removed the seat of government from Rome to Byzantium. "The traditional Greek and Roman arts," says Richard Glazier, "were now assimilated with the arts of Persia and Syria, but molded and influenced by the new religion, giving the strong personal vitality, deep symbolism, which was so remarkable throughout the Byzantine period." *Byzantium* was changed to *Constantinople,* but the ancient name was perpetuated in the art of the period. Saracenic ornament was of oriental origin, and its influence was largely confined to countries that came in touch with eastern influence. Unlike Byzantine ornament, animal forms were excluded. Intricate interlaced lines and conventionalized leaves formed the basis of Saracenic decoration. Contemporary with the Saracenic movement were two schemes of ornament, having much in common with the oriental style. These were the Celtic and Scandi-

navian. The beautiful patterns of the Celts, based on circles, triangles, and endless chains, and the bolder interlaced work of the Scandinavians, form two unique phases of mediæval designing. The Celts used the serpent as a dominant *motif* while the Scandinavians gave special prominence to the dragon.

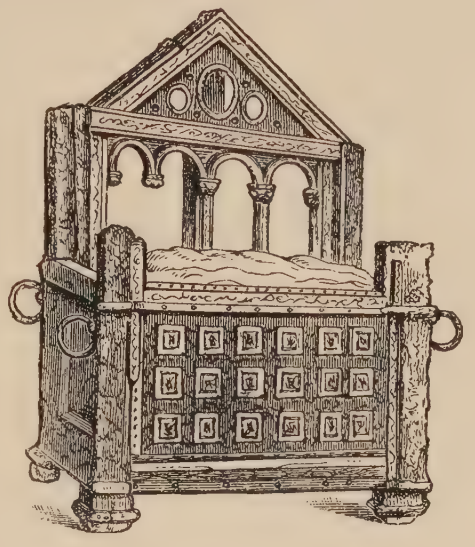
These early schools of ornament had little bearing on the furniture-making of the period, but their influence on future wood-carving was so important that later results cannot be understood without a brief reference to them. Byzantine decoration was little fitted for domestic furniture and its use was largely confined to religious pieces. The famous chair of St. Peter at Rome, said to be the oldest piece of wooden furniture in existence, is an example of Byzantine work. It is inlaid in gold and ivory, in an intricate and beautiful manner, the details of which are lost in the illustration. The importance of Byzantine ornament from the viewpoint of furniture-making lies in the fact that the trefoil and the quatrefoil were continued in Gothic ornament, and in the newer guise became a part of furniture decoration for three centuries.

In order to understand the significance of Gothic art and its bearing upon all handicraft of the period it will be necessary to consider the conditions that gave birth to this last and greatest of mediæval styles.

"In the latter part of the twelfth century church architecture was revolutionized by the Gothic school which originated in the north of France. The Romanesque type of building had long been the accepted form; the time was at hand for a change. As in all great innovations the new movement swung far from the old. The pointed, or Gothic, arch solved a problem of construction which the round or Romanesque arch failed to do, and finally, the enthusiasm of the people, inspired by the crusades, and the attempt to win the Holy Sepulchre, sought to express itself in new forms."

It is not possible to affix a date to the first Gothic dwelling. Although to France belongs the honor of originating the school, Germany and Spain followed closely in her lead. In Germany, Romanesque architecture had reached a greater degree of excellence than in any other country of the north, save France, and it was more than a century before the Germans equaled the French in the purity of their Gothic buildings. But the Germans held to the type longer and the exaggerated or "flamboyant Gothic" of the fifteenth century, which marked the decline of the art in France, was little known in the provinces beyond the Rhine. In Spain the pointed arch was combined with Moorish cupolas and Spanish minarets. It was not until the reign of Ferdinand III, the contemporary of Louis IX of France and Henry III of England, that Spain produced buildings that compared favorably with those of Burgundy and Normandy. Ferdinand defeated the Moors at Cordova and Seville, united the kingdoms of Leon and Castile, and restored the church

to Christianity. Under his patronage the fine arts flourished. The magnificent cathedral at Toledo, modeled on Notre Dame, and the smaller one at Burgos were erected during his reign.



ST. PETER'S CHAIR

Italy, the stronghold of Romanesque and Byzantine traditions, was little influenced by the Gothic wave during this century. England, now closely in touch with France, early felt the impulse and having few classic prejudices to overcome, was ripe for a rapid architectural development. The cathedrals of Durham, Peterborough, Norwich, and Canterbury show the beauty of the early northern school. Although Gothic construction was confined for nearly fifty years to church edifices it was not destined to remain simply religious in character. Gradually royal dwellings were altered to admit of traceried windows, arched doors, and foliated carvings, and by the latter part of the thirteenth century the homes of the common people were built on similar principles. Furniture of all historic epochs is more or less a reflection of the prevailing architecture, and this was never more clearly demonstrated than during the Gothic period. Chairs and tables, benches and chests, all followed in design or decoration the lines of the pointed arch.

Great changes had taken place in the furnishings of houses. The crusades had opened an intercourse with the orient, and the seaports of France, Italy, and Spain were engaged in active commerce with the east. Sovereigns of this century, with a few exceptions, married foreign queens, and thus the manners of one country were introduced into another. In England three of the Plantagenet kings had wedded French princesses and as each in turn inaugurated French customs there was little of Saxon simplicity at the English court. The barons and retainers, eager for royal approval, patterned their homes as closely as possible on Norman standards.

It remained for Eleanor, of Provence, queen of Henry III, whose wardrobe and furniture filled three ships, to exert an influence which was felt in the homes of the people. During her reign the use of tapestries, hitherto confined to the palace and to the halls of the barons, became general, and added greatly to the comfort and beauty of interiors. Tapestries, or dorsels, as they were sometimes called from their

ecclesiastical origin, were both woven and embroidered. The former were usually of small and intricate patterns, Byzantine and Gothic in character, and were imported from the tapestry-weaving districts of the Loire. The latter, while crude in workmanship, were more original in treatment. Thirteenth-century ladies in England and France spent many hours over the tambour frame depicting hunting and battle scenes, "jousts," and tournaments. These unique specimens of handiwork were modeled on the famous Bayeux tapestry, woven by Queen Matilda and her ladies in waiting.

During Eleanor's reign wood paneling was introduced into Windsor Castle, and the halls of the manor houses were further enriched with Gothic carvings and mural decorations. Furniture in England had already responded to Gothic tendencies, and the massive chairs reserved for state occasions, and the simpler settles for daily use, were ornamented in the style that had found favor on the continent. No furniture of Henry's time has been preserved, but a celebrated piece of Gothic carving of the following reign is now in existence. The coronation chair in Westminster, made famous by a long line of monarchs, was first used when Edward Plantagenet ascended the throne.

Prince Edward was on the continent fighting the French when he received the tidings of his father's death. He remained to vanquish his foes, returning the following year, in the summer of 1274, to take possession of the English throne.

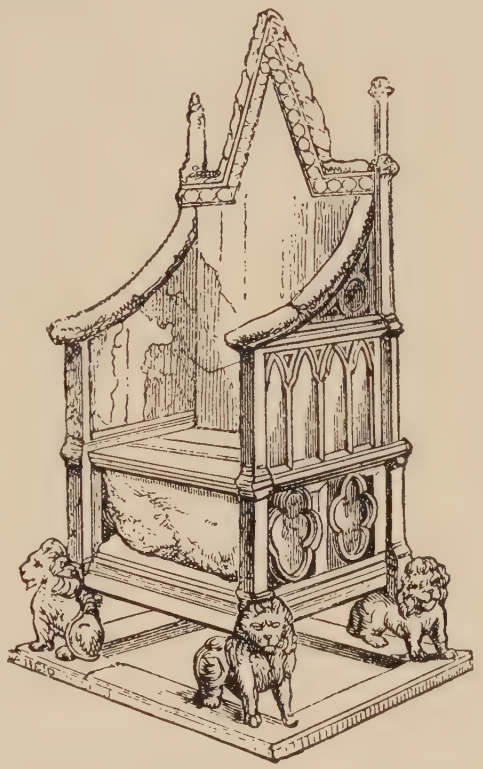
With the exception of Mary Tudor and William III, every English sovereign from Edward I to Edward VII has been crowned in this historic relic. William III and his queen were crowned together in a chair made expressly for them, and Queen Mary received a chair from the pope especially blessed for her accession.

Made of oak and covered with heavy gilding "Edward's chair" was the work of a Florentine artist, employed at Guildford Castle, who builded better than he knew. Beneath the seat and supported by lions is a rough-hewn stone which has the tradition of being the identical one which Jacob used as a pillow at Bethel. The lions are modern and are inferior to the rest of the workmanship. Aside from this venerated piece of furniture, so associated with English history, little remains of early Gothic handicraft in England, except that which is ecclesiastical in character.

A few of the royal chests and coffers of the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries are in existence, and are interesting specimens of wood-carving and metal work. Hinges and locks are intricately chased with trefoils and quatrefoils, and sometimes ornamented with heraldic devices. A chest executed during the reign of King John is described as being "of oak, richly decorated with iron plates and hinges"; another of similar date, "of oak, decorated with wrought-iron locks and clamps and with basses of metal, on which are enameled escutcheons"; another "of carved cypress, inlaid with ivory and mosaics, and having clasps of wrought silver."

The dower chests of Eleanor, of Provence, although recorded as being of unusual beauty, have not survived. A coffer belonging to the queen of Edward I, who was of Spanish birth, is now in the British Museum. It is of dark wood, painted in Moorish style, and the colors still retain something of their early brilliancy. The hinges are of iron, heavily ornamented, and the locks display the arms of Castile.

With her chests the Spanish princess brought Spanish ideas, and thus a third element was added to the Norman-Saxon court. Moorish carpets, decorated leather from Aragon, brass hanging-lamps and Sevillian pottery were among her possessions. An inventory of the royal household of this period contains "pitchers of gold, plates and dishes of silver, gold salts, alms bowls, silver hanapers or baskets, a pair of knives with enameled silver sheaths, a fork of crystal and a silver fork with handle of ebony, and a looking-glass of silver." "Oizer mats" are mentioned, and were used by King Edward and his queen as cushions when they sat at table. Furniture was more varied during this reign and included linen-presses, *armoires*, and *dressoirs*.



ENGLISH CORONATION CHAIR, SHOWING THE ARCH AND THE QUATREFOIL

CHAPTER II

FURNITURE OF THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE STYLE: THE POINTED ARCH, THE TREFOIL, THE QUATREFOIL, AND SIMPLE TRACERY. FURNITURE WAS MASSIVE AND GOTHIC TREATMENT WAS CONFINED TO DECORATION, CONSTRUCTION BEING LITTLE AFFECTED BY IT DURING THIS CENTURY.

CHAPTER II

FURNITURE OF THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY

GOTHIC furniture reached its highest development in the fourteenth century. The exaggerations that characterized the work of the late Gothic school, when grotesque heads and distorted animals were introduced into many forms of carving, were unknown at this time. The furniture of this period held to a few vital principles and these were embodied in the plainest as well as in the most elaborate pieces. The trefoil and the quartrefoil used in connection with the pointed arch, were the chief *motifs* in wood-carving. The tracery was simpler than in the designs of the succeeding century when furniture-makers followed the lead of the architects, and used ornament with a lavish hand.

Chests were still important items in household inventories, but their original supremacy was over. In their wake followed a host of pieces, the very names of which are now obsolete. Standards, *bahuts*, and hanapers were all a development of the chest, but each had its special significance and each its particular place. Standards held implements of the chase, *bahuts* belonged to the housewife and contained stores of linen, and in hanapers were concealed the family valuables.

Cupboards, literally meaning "boards containing cups," came into use during this period, and furniture was further supplemented by the credence which was of church origin. Like the *dressoir* it served the purpose of a buffet or serving table. Viollet-le-Duc illustrates a credence of the late Gothic period which contains four shelves, arranged like steps, each one filled with gold and silver vessels. The *dressoir* was of simpler form, and a less costly article. The dresser as a piece of dining room furniture still retains its original significance. The use of the word to designate a dressing-table or a bureau is modern and quite incorrect.

The distinction between a press and a cupboard was in the beginning clearly defined. The cupboard was made without doors and was scarcely more than a shelf on a trestle. In the fifteenth century the cupboard, the press, and the *armoire* were more nearly alike. The significance of the word *armoire* is somewhat obscure, and one upon which writers on furniture are not agreed. Frederick Roe, in his book, *Ancient Coffers and Cabinets*, suggests that the original purpose of the piece of furniture thus designated, was to hold armor.

During the fourteenth century the hall retained its feudal character. Life had grown more luxurious, but the general plan of the house was unchanged. In the manor house a "withdrawing-room" was added to the lower story, taking the

place of the Norman *parloir*. The modern drawing-room is an evolution of this early apartment which was primarily for the use of the mistress of the house.

The bedroom was furnished with more comforts and showed a greater change than any other portion of the home. The bed had become a bedstead in the usual acceptance of the term. The original meaning of the word "bedstead" was "place for a bed." During the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, except among the opulent, sleeping arrangements were very primitive. Testers were introduced at the time of the Conquest, and "tester beds," or "tent beds," are mentioned by early historians. During the fourteenth century the bedstead assumed another character and was often the most ornamental piece of furniture in the house. Some of the Gothic beds suggest carved cages, others are fine examples of wood-carving, and show a beauty of construction unknown in the canopy beds of a later date. A fine example of a Gothic bed is seen in the bedchamber of the Castle Meran, located in the German Tyrol. A large portion of this stronghold dates from the twelfth century, but the room illustrated here is of a later period. The doors and windows show the pure Gothic arch and the furniture exhibits the simple tracery which was such a beautiful feature of wood carving of this period.

A new article of furniture in the shape of an elevated chest, the cabinet of a later day, came into vogue about the middle of the century and was of Italian origin. Chairs, with the exception of folding-stools, were of huge proportions, and were made more massive by the addition of wooden canopies. Tables, on the other hand, were exceedingly simple, and formed a striking contrast to the rest of household furniture. They were made solely for utility, and outside of Italy were overlooked by the decorator. In design they were long and narrow, but the trestle supports of the previous century had given place to more careful workmanship. One form of table was made with the "bolt and slot construction," a modern term expressing mediæval methods. This table is chiefly interesting inasmuch as it shows how closely arts and crafts workers have copied early designs.

While all handicraft of this period was marked by beauty of design and honest workmanship each country excelled in certain lines. The Italians led in the handling of low relief and in the application of color to ornament. Their work, particularly that of the Florentines, was characterized by great delicacy of feeling. The Germans were especially skilled in the execution of elaborate floral and heraldic *motifs*. The locks, hinges, and keys of cupboards and presses received as much attention as the carving of the wood, and often formed an important part of the decoration. The French, from the first, were a nation of furniture-makers, and although their handicraft lacked the exquisite finish of the Italians it fully equaled the work of the south in beauty of design.

The Swiss were adepts in wood-carving and the Tyrolese, in this century, de-

BEDCHAMBER, CASTLE MERAN, GERMAN TYROL. LATE FOURTEENTH CENTURY

FRENCH CHEST, LATE FOURTEENTH CENTURY

veloped a unique school of ornament. Their furniture was partly French, partly German in character, and yet with certain qualities peculiar to itself. The Scandinavians were masters of a rude style of carving, half religious, half mythological, in subject. The work of the Danes was patterned after that of the Germans, as was also that of the Austrians. The Russians, until the beginning of the Romanoff dynasty, followed Byzantine canons, and the Poles and the Hungarians followed the Russians. The Dutch and the Flemings lagged behind the other nations in the art of furniture-making. It was not until the sixteenth century that they equaled either the French or the Germans in this particular. But Flemish and Dutch furniture remained beautiful and individual long after that of the French had become exaggerated and absurd. The Spaniards never adopted the Gothic style pure and simple in either their home architecture or their furniture. Spain, at this time, was a power on the high seas, and Spanish woodwork combined the designs of many countries. The Portuguese, when not at war with the Spaniards, copied them slavishly. The English selected the best of all that Normandy and Flanders sent to their shores and made it their own.

The fourteenth century inaugurated a new era in domestic architecture. The religious enthusiasm of the people, inspired by the crusades, was over, and the zeal which was previously lavished on churches was now expended on dwellings. The origin of many famous castles in England and France may be traced to this activity.

GERMAN CHEST, LATE FOURTEENTH CENTURY

The rapid progress of home architecture was not confined to the dwellings of the nobility. The improvement in the houses of the middle classes was no less remarkable. Hand in hand with the outward betterment went an inward transformation. The comforts which were known hitherto only in the homes of the opulent were now to be found in humbler circles. Class distinctions were more sharply drawn, but class privileges were extending. So prosperous did the trades-people of Paris become that an edict was passed by Charles the Fair limiting the household possessions of half the Parisians. No bourgeois could use wax candles or sleep under a canopy of gold Genoa cloth. A similar law in England, framed under Edward III, regulated the number of tapestries that a merchant might hang in his house and the number of yards of Flanders embroidery his wife might wear on her gown. In England the law was made in order to exclude French and Flemish merchandise and to compel the people to patronize home industries. In France it was passed to hold in check the growing ambitions of the trades-people and to prevent their encroaching on the rights of their superiors.

The fourteenth century was an important one in England's history. The cowardly Edward II was succeeded by the illustrious Edward III, and during the latter's long reign events took place at home and abroad that exerted a powerful influence on England's future. The victories of Crécy and Poitiers were not more memorable than certain acts of Parliament; less so, perhaps, than that measure passed in 1362, which established the English language as the speech of the nation. The use of French was discontinued at court and Norman customs went out of fashion.

TYROLEAN TABLE

The long siege with France had brought about a reaction in favor of English productions. Edward's marriage to Philippa of Hainault had strengthened the tie between England and Flanders, but as the war across the channel progressed, and the Flemings were drawn into the conflict, this friendship cooled. Commerce ceased with Flanders and the king framed laws to prevent the sale of Flemish articles. These royal edicts fostered the home arts, and English houses were furnished with home-made articles.

Many of the finest baronial halls of England and Scotland were built in part during the reign of Edward III. Savoy Castle on the Thames, erected by the earl of Richmond in 1245, was remodeled a century later by the first duke of Lancaster who spent a fortune on it. Here, after the battle of Poitiers, resided the captive king, John of France, here came on many occasions that idol of the people, the Black Prince, and here Chaucer lived for a year as the guest of John of Gaunt and his wife, the young duchess of Lancaster. Chaucer composed many of his most famous poems at Savoy, and met within its doors the fair Lady Philippa, whom he afterward married. John of Gaunt maintained a style of living surpassed only by that of the royal family. The tapestries, furniture, paintings, and plate of Savoy were, according to an old writer, "as fine as anything in Christendom." Part of the architecture of Haddon Hall is late fourteenth century. The great banquet-room still retains its Gothic woodwork and its traceried windows, built by the Vernons, who owned the estate at that time. Lynes in Cheshire, erected on ground granted by the king to Sir Petryn Leigh, for valor displayed at Crécy, is a stately pile, and has preserved something of its first semblance. Cotehile in Cornwall, Glamis in Scotland, and Norworth Castle on the Border, the latter first occupied by Percy Hotspur, the hero of Chevy Chase, all trace their grim walls and grim histories to the time of the third Edward. Hardly less renowned is Sizergh Hall in Westmoreland, bearing on its crenelated tower a sculptured shield with the quarterings of the d'Aincourts and the Stricklands. This bit of English heraldry is unusual, as it is one of the earliest examples of the placing of the arms of the wife before those of her husband—a custom unknown before the fourteenth century. Sizergh Hall in Queen Elizabeth's reign was famous for its beautiful woodwork and furniture. The paneling of one room in this old castle is now in the Kensington

Museum, and ranks as one of the finest examples of its day.

In Penshurst, near Tunbridge Wells, the great entrance hall has not been altered since it was built by Sir John de Poulteney who was four times lord mayor of London, and who was noted "for his public charities, magnificent housekeeping, and splendid achievements." From Sir John it passed to the duke of Bedford, then to the duke of Gloucester, and later to Buckingham. In 1447 it became the property of the crown, was bestowed upon Sir William Sydney by Edward VI., after the battle of Flodden Field, and descended from him to Sir Philip Sydney, with whose name the fame of Penshurst is chiefly associated. Many descriptions of the ancient hall have been given. "The pointed timbered roof is supported by a series of grotesque corbels, each the size of life," says a writer of the early eighteenth century. "The screen of the gallery is richly carved and paneled. The minstrel's gallery fills the side opposite the daïs. The Gothic windows are narrow and lofty. Every object calls to mind a feudal age. The oak tables on which retainers feasted still occupy the hall."

In striking contrast to this English interior of the fourteenth century is M. Sauval's description of an apartment in the Hôtel de Bohême, erected by Charles V and occupied in 1388 by the duke of Orleans. "I shall not attempt," he writes, "to speak of the cellars and wine-cellars, the bake-houses, the fruiteries, the salt-stores, the fur-rooms, the porters' lodges, the guard-rooms, the wood-yard, or the glass-stores; neither shall I describe the tapestry-room, the linen-room, nor indeed any of the various conveniences which were then to be found in the yards of this place, as well as in the abodes of other princes and nobles. I shall simply remark that, among the many suites of rooms which com-

TYROLEAN CUPBOARD, LATE FOURTEENTH CENTURY

posed it, two occupied the first and second stories of the main building. The first was raised some few feet above the ground floor of the court, and was occupied by Violet of Milan and her husband, Louis of Orleans. Each of these two suites of rooms consisted of a great hall, a chamber of state, a large chamber, a wardrobe-room, and a chapel. The state chambers were eight *toises*, that is, about fifty and a half feet long. The duke's chambers were six *toises* and a half square, and lighted by long and narrow windows of wire work, with Gothic trellis work of iron. The wainscots and the ceilings were made of Irish wood, the same as in the Louvre. Among the ornamental furniture were a large vase of silver for holding sweetmeats and a fine wooden casket covered with vermilion cordovan, nailed and bordered with a narrow gold band and shutting with a key."

The ancient chronicle of M. Sauval would be incomplete without a reference to the gorgeous Spanish leathers in Bohême. "In this palace," he continues, "there was a room used by the duke, hung with cloth of gold bordered with vermilion velvet, embroidered with roses. The duchess had a room hung with vermilion leather decorated with cross-bows, which were her coat of arms. That of the duke of Burgundy was hung with cloth of gold, embroidered with windmills. There were, besides, eight carpets of glossy texture, with gold flowers, one representing the seven virtues and seven vices, another the history of Charlemagne, another that of Saint Louis. There were also cushions of gold, twenty-four pieces of vermilion leather of Aragon, and four carpets of Aragon leather."

Few descriptions of the homes of the people are on record. Litchfield, in writing of a French house of this period, states that chests, more or less carved and ornamented with iron work, settles of oak and chestnut, stools or benches with carved supports, a bedstead and a *prie-dieu* chair, and a table with a plain slab, supported on standards, would nearly complete the furniture of the chief room in the house of a well-to-do merchant.

CHAPTER III

FURNITURE OF THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE STYLE: THE LATE GOTHIC ARCH, THE QUATREFOIL, THE CINQUEFOIL, AND A MORE COMPLICATED SCHEME OF CARVING. FURNITURE SHOWED GRACEFUL OUTLINES, BUT TOWARD THE END OF THE CENTURY BECAME TOO HEAVILY ORNAMENTED FOR BEAUTY. ANIMALS AND GROTESQUE HEADS WERE COMBINED WITH GOTHIC DETAILS AND THE CHARM OF THE EARLIER PIECES VANISHED.

CHAPTER III

FURNITURE OF THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY

THE fifteenth century was a period of transition. It marked the end of the Middle Ages and the beginning of modern history. The keep, the drawbridge, the embattled tower, had no part in the architecture of the day, and with their passing the mode of living was greatly altered. The hall ceased to be the point about which the life of the house centered. It was no longer the scene of activity. The daïs, the minstrels' gallery, the long tables for the retainers, lost their significance. Dining in public went out of fashion. The lord of the manor added a room to the great hall and dined with his family in privacy. Life was more luxurious, but less picturesque than in an earlier and ruder age.

The century that witnessed the waning of mediævalism was one of great progress. The invention of gunpowder revolutionized war, that of the compass increased navigation, and that of printing ushered in the dawn of a new era. It was an epoch of stirring events that included the wars of the Roses, the conquest of Granada, the expulsion of the Moors from Spain, the capture of Constantinople, and the discovery of America.

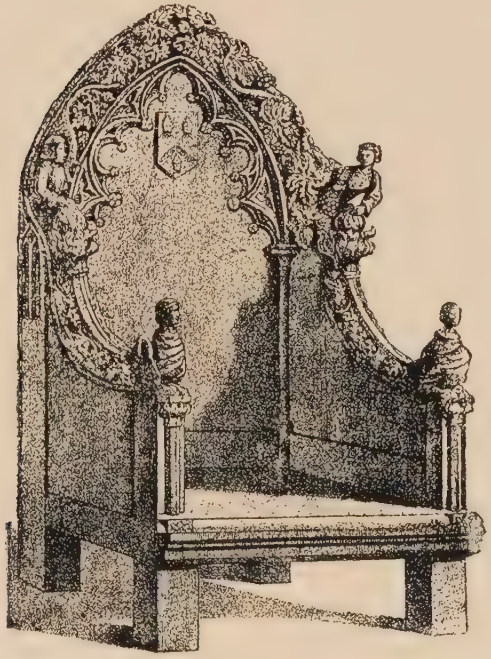
Architecturally the fifteenth century had less to its credit than the fourteenth. Houses embodied the characteristics of the late Gothic, and while there was a greater variety of material used than at any previous time buildings showed less constructive skill.

The château of Langeais, the Cluny, and the famous house of Jacques Cœur at Bourges, are typical French dwellings of this period. Hurstmonceaux Hall, in Sussex, erected by Sir Roger Fiennes, treasurer of the household under Henry VI, and Tattershall Castle, in Lincolnshire, built by Ralph, Lord Cromwell, treasurer of the exchequer under the same sovereign, are notable examples of English architecture of the day. Both are of Flemish brick, with stone trimmings and were the first mansions built in England of this material. Houses of this age were not distinctive types. They were links between the fortified buildings of feudal times and the more comfortable homes of the Renaissance, and are chiefly interesting from the historical point of view.

The furniture of the early fifteenth century did not differ materially from that of the fourteenth. Designs remained strong and simple and ornament was a means, not an end. But the day of Gothic simplicity was nearly over, and by the middle of the century the fate that had overtaken the architects pursued the furniture-

makers. Ornament was piled upon ornament until the original beauty was entirely effaced. Skill of hand remained; the brain back of the hand had deteriorated.

A waving form of ornament resembling a tongue of flame supplanted the geometrical tracery, while cinquefoils took the place of the earlier trefoils and quatrefoils. This flaming motive had dominated church architecture, to its great detriment, for more than a hundred years and had given rise to the terms, Flamboyant, in France, Flowing, in England, and *Fischblase*, in Germany. Wood-carvers sought to surpass each other in the elaboration of this theme, and in fantastic combinations of foliage, grotesque animals, and figures.



ENGLISH MONASTERY CHAIR, FIFTEENTH CENTURY

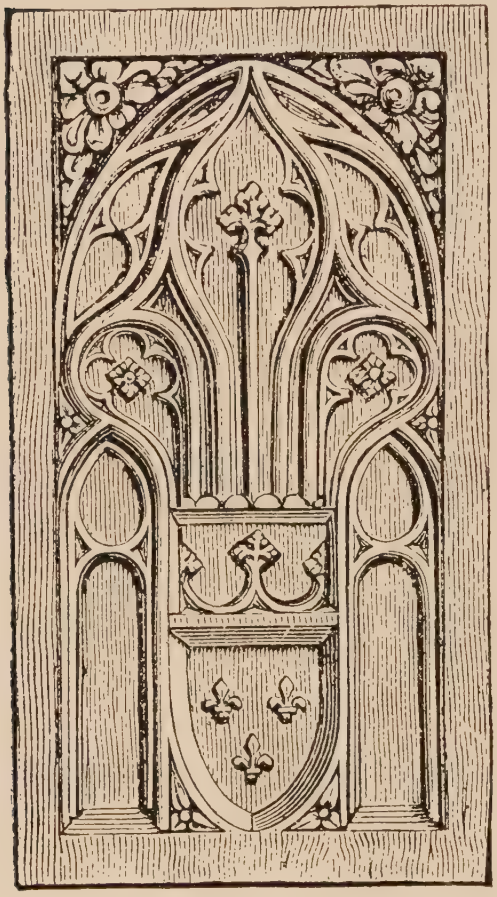
Chairs more than any other pieces of furniture suffered at the hands of the artisan. Built on severe lines they were little adapted for the overloaded system of decoration. Chests and cupboards, while lacking the simplicity which had hitherto been their chief charm, were by their construction less injured by complicated ornament. Many of the finest specimens of fifteenth-century woodwork were in the form of presses and cupboards. Bedsteads were too cumbersome in design, and, except in the homes of the lower classes, too ornate to be interesting. Tables had altered little in shape or purpose and were the sole articles of furniture to conform to severe lines and to unadorned surfaces.

It was an age of exaggeration in furniture and scarcely less so in dress. The pointed cap, so long a feature of mediæval fashion, rose to enormous heights, and shoes were so elongated that walking with ease became a fine art. At the French court, ladies in formal attire could not pass through an ordinary doorway without lowering their heads, and the followers of Charles VII were obliged to walk three feet apart in order to have sufficient space for the long and tortuous points of their shoes.

The resemblance between the architecture and the furniture of historic periods is plainly discernible. The similarity that costumes bear to both might also be

THE TYPE OF HALL THAT BECAME EXTINCT IN THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY. REPRODUCED FROM AN OLD ILLUMINATION

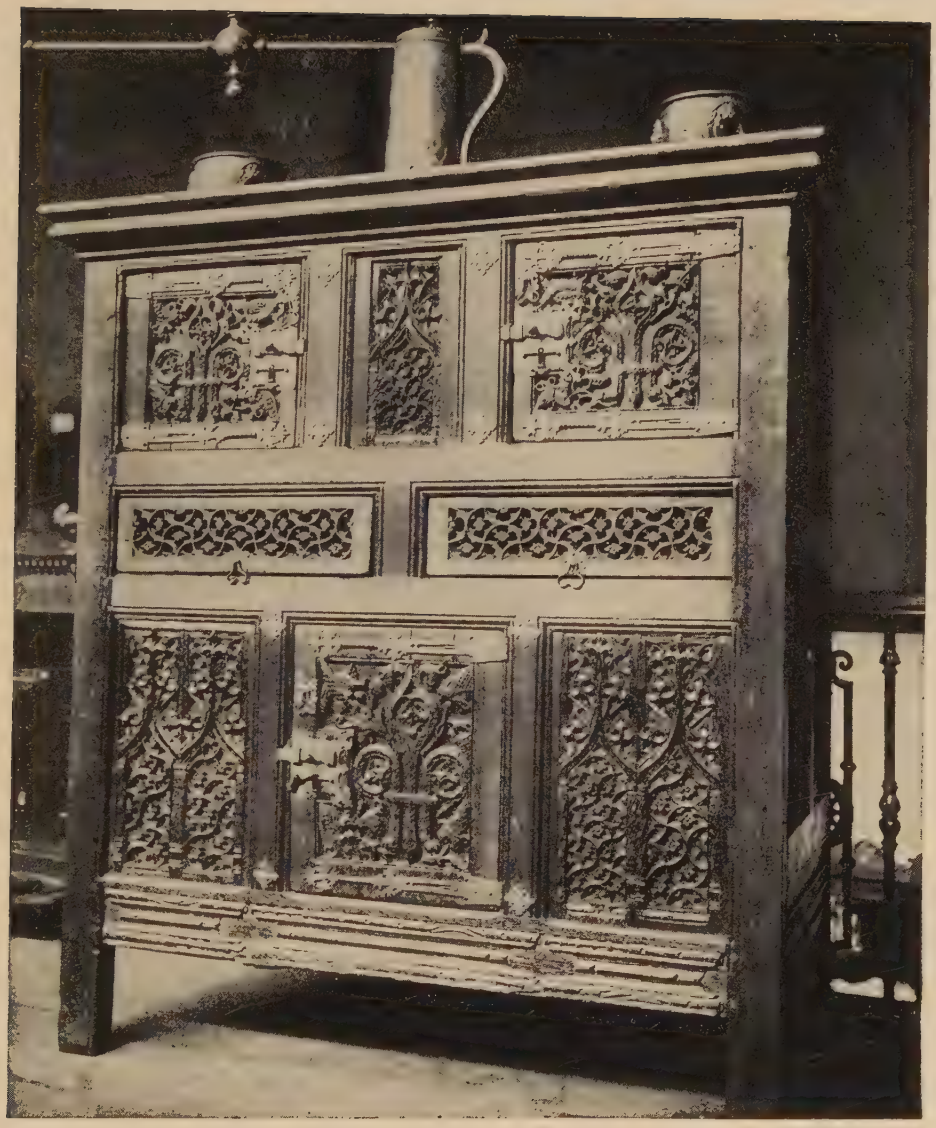
cited. Many parallels could be drawn between Louis XIV furniture and the gorgeous dress of that day, between the more ornate furniture of the reign of Louis XV and the greater extravagance in fashions, between the simpler Louis XVI furniture and the return of the French court under Marie Antoinette to a more refined mode of dress, between the classical furniture of Napoleon's time and the severe gowns of the empire, and between the stately furniture of the colonial period and the equally stately costumes. So long as the pointed arch remained a vital force in architecture, furniture and dress reflected in a greater or less degree Gothic principles. This period included three centuries and might well be called the Pointed Age.



FRENCH GOTHIC PANEL

No strikingly novel pieces of furniture were evolved during the fifteenth century. New methods entered into construction and new effects were gained by combining different woods. English and German oak, French chestnut, Italian walnut, and Spanish cypress had long been famous, but their use was confined largely to the countries in which they were produced. But now woods were imported extensively, and we find Spanish cabinet-makers experimenting in the walnut of Italy, Italian artisans using the olive and cypress of Spain, French furniture-makers turning to Flanders and England for oak, and to the southern countries for the softer woods, and English workmen, while clinging mainly to oak, adding French chestnut and Spanish olive and cypress.

Italian walnut was as hard as oak and almost as enduring. Many of the choicest examples of the cabinet work of this period, found in museums and private collections, are in this beautiful dark wood. It was better adapted than oak for the



FLEMISH CUPBOARD

lighter pieces of furniture, and its exquisite grain yielded a more graceful form of ornament. In the hands of the Italian and Spanish craftsmen it became an ideal medium.

In Florence and Vargos were fashioned those chests and cupboards which placed the work of the south so far above that of the north. The Florentines had long demonstrated their ability, and in this century the people of Vargos nearly equaled them. Vargueno furniture was as celebrated as Cordovan leather.

Flamboyant architecture had made little progress in Spain and Spanish furniture was free from the absurdities found in the furniture of the north. Moorish traditions were deeply rooted and designs exhibited Saracenic rather than Gothic influence. Gothic *motifs* were not entirely absent, but they were largely overshadowed by the richer ornament of the east. Spain was the only European country that did not yield to the spell of the pointed arch. This worked for good in the fifteenth century when all other nations except Italy were well-nigh engulfed in Gothic detail.

With the exception of the English monastery chair the pieces of furniture illustrated in this chapter are early fifteenth century. The cupboard is of oak and is a typical example of Flemish handiwork. The carving shows the late Gothic arch, and the tracery is more compact than in earlier pieces of furniture. By the treatment of the arch the date of an article may be determined. Furniture followed closely on architectural lines, and it is interesting to note that when windows and doors showed changes in construction, cabinets and chairs exhibited similar tendencies. The difference set forth in the construction of a room may be seen in the Tyrolean interiors. The doors and windows in the bedchamber of the castle Meran, illustrated in the preceding chapter, are in the earlier style. The anteroom reproduced in this chapter shows the later treatment in the construction of the small door.

The Tyrolese more than any other people of Europe have clung to the customs of their ancestors. Prominent in the affairs of Italy and Switzerland during the Middle Ages they have had in modern times little part in the political warfare of their neighbors. Favored by an isolated situation they have been undisturbed by the march of civilization. In manners, in dress, in their home life they have retained the traditions of an earlier age.

During mediæval times the Tyrol was alternately occupied by the French and the Germans, and architecture and furniture combine both French and German tendencies. This is well illustrated in the fine old castles that cling to the mountain tops and make this country one of the most picturesque in Europe. These feudal strongholds passed from one conquering baron to another. The schloss of one decade became the château of the next.

ANTEROOM, CASTLE MERAN, GERMAN TYROL, SHOWING THE EARLY AND THE LATE GOTHIC ARCH

Near the village of Meran stands the castle of that name, dating back to the twelfth century. The exterior has undergone many changes, but the interior has been little altered. The paneling, the mural decorations, and the traceried windows are early Gothic; the furniture and the tapestries belong to the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. The furniture is particularly fine and consists of chests mounted with iron, presses and cabinets ornamented with hinges and locks of copper, long tables without decoration, and many beautiful chairs. The latter are similar to the old Roman curules, and unlike English chairs of this period, with their high backs and ponderous carving. A chair of this type is shown in the anteroom of Meran illustrated on page 31. The furniture of this old castle represents the best of the late Gothic school.

Toward the end of the fifteenth century a great change took place in handicraft. A new force born in Italy gradually spread throughout Europe. Gothic art was not uprooted in a day, and a period of confusion in design followed, in which the old forms were combined with the new principles of the Renaissance.

CHAPTER IV

FURNITURE OF THE ITALIAN RENAISSANCE

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE STYLE. DURING THE TRANSITIONAL PERIOD CLASSIC DETAILS WERE COMBINED WITH GOTHIC CONSTRUCTION. LATER THE PURE RENAISSANCE WAS ESTABLISHED. WOOD-CARVERS ADAPTED THE PRINCIPAL MOTIFS OF THE DAY WHICH CONSISTED OF FOLIAGE BANDED WITH RIBBON, SWAGS OF FRUIT AND FLOWERS, THE ACANTHUS LEAF, AND THE ARABESQUE. FURNITURE BECAME MORE VARIED IN DESIGN AND WAS AUGMENTED BY MANY PIECES UNKNOWN IN THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY.

CHAPTER IV

FURNITURE OF THE ITALIAN RENAISSANCE

"IN the work of the Renaissance," writes John Addington Symonds, "all the great nations of Europe shared. But it must never be forgotten that the true Renaissance began in Italy. In art, in scholarship, in science, in the mediation between antique culture and the modern intellect, the Italians took the lead, handing to Germany and France and England the restored humanities complete. Spain and England have since done more for the exploration and colonization of the world. Germany achieved the labor of the Reformation almost single-handed. France has collected, centralized, and diffused intelligence with irresistible energy. But if we return to the first origins of the Renaissance, we find that, at a time when the rest of Europe was inert, Italy had already begun to organize the various elements of the modern spirit, and to set the fashions whereby the other great nations should live and learn. . . . .

"We cannot refer the whole phenomena of the Renaissance to any one cause or circumstance, or limit them within the field of any one department of human knowledge. If we ask the students of art what they mean by the Renaissance, they will reply that it was the revolution effected in architecture, painting, and sculpture by the recovery of antique monuments. Students of literature, philosophy, and theology see in the Renaissance that discovery of manuscripts, that passion for antiquity, that progress in philology and criticism, which led to a correct knowledge of the classics, to a fresh taste in poetry, to new systems of thought, to more accurate analysis, and finally to the Lutheran schism and the emancipation of the conscience. Men of science will discourse about the discovery of the solar system by Copernicus and Galileo, the anatomy of Vesalius, and Harvey's theory of the circulation of the blood. The political historian, again, has his own answer to the question. The extinction of feudalism, the development of the great nationalities of Europe, the growth of monarchy, the limitation of the ecclesiastical authority, and the erection of the papacy into an Italian kingdom, and, in the last place, the gradual emergence of that sense of popular freedom which exploded in the Revolution—these are the aspects of the movement which engross his attention. Jurists will describe the dissolution of legal frictions based upon the false decretals, the acquisition of a true text of the Roman Code, and the attempt to introduce a rational method into the theory of modern jurisprudence. Men whose attention has been turned to the history of discoveries and inventions will relate

SIXTEENTH-CENTURY CHEST OF DRAWERS, LUCCA

the exploration of America and the East, or will point out the benefits conferred upon the world by the arts of printing and engraving, by the compass and the telescope, by paper and by gunpowder. Yet neither any one of these answers, taken separately, nor indeed all taken together, will offer a solution of the problem.

"By the term Renaissance, or new birth, is indicated a natural movement, not to be explained by this or that characteristic, but to be accepted as an effort of humanity for which at length the time had come, and in the onward progress of which we still participate. The history of the Renaissance is not the history of arts, or of sciences, or of literature, or even of nations. It is no mere political mutation, no new fashion of art, no restoration of classical standards of taste. The arts and the inventions, the knowledge and the books, which suddenly became vital at the time of the Renaissance, had long lain neglected on the shores of the Dead Sea of the Middle Ages. It was not their discovery which caused the Renaissance. It was the intellectual energy, the spontaneous outburst of intelligence, which enabled mankind at that moment to make use of them."

Broadly speaking, the Renaissance had three distinct styles: The tre-cento, quatro-cento, and cinque-cento. The first was developed between the years 1300 and 1400 and its influence was confined to architecture and sculpture. Giotto, Arnolfo di Cambia, Andrea Taffi Orcagna, and Nicolo Pisano were its chief exponents. The quatro-cento belonged to the fifteenth century and was a more classic style than its predecessors. The work of Luca della Robbia, of Donatello and Ghiberti, and of Filippo Brunelleschi are magnificent examples of the second division. The cinque-cento was the culmination of the art of the Renaissance and is associated with the mighty names of da Vinci, Raphael, and Michaelangelo. The former styles were but preparation for the architecture, sculpture, painting, and decorative arts of the sixteenth century. Under the patronage of the popes and the powerful Medici family, pictures were painted, statues carved, tapestries woven, metals wrought, in a manner that the world had never seen before.

"During that period," to quote from Symonds again. "the entire nation seemed to be endowed with an instinct for the beautiful and with the capacity for producing it in every form."

No article was too commonplace to receive the attention of great artists. The same care that was expended on the façade of a cathedral or the interior of a palace was bestowed on the simplest piece of woodwork. The carved chairs, the painted chests, and the inlaid cabinets all show that perfection of detail which characterized the boldest undertakings. It was this wonderful *ensemble*, this linking of the fine and decorative arts, that made the Renaissance the golden age of achievement.

It was not until the cinque-cento period that furniture showed traces of the classic revival. Wood-workers clung to Gothic designs long after stone-cutters had discarded them. Thus some of the tre-cento and quatro-cento *motifs* are exhibited in the furniture of the sixteenth century. It is well in studying the woodwork of this epoch to keep in mind the leading features of the three styles. The tre-cento consisted of interlacing lines combined with simple tracery and conventionalized foliage. The tracery was Saracenic rather than Gothic, and entirely free from symbolism. The quatro-cento blended the festoon, the garland, the band, and the cartouche with naturalistic fruit and flowers. The cinque-cento was a restoration of classic details and included the fret, the arabesque, the anthemion, the scroll, and the acanthus. The arabesque or grotesque, as it was termed from its discovery in a Roman grotto, was composed of vases, shields, masks,

SIXTEENTH-CENTURY CABINET, LUCCA

ANTEROOM CHAIR OF WALNUT

animal forms, and floral emblems. Symmetry, balance, and perfect proportions, united with faultless execution, saved the arabesque from becoming a grotesque in both senses of the word. In the hands of Raphael, Giulio Romano, Sansovino, and the Lombardi, this type of ornament reached a high degree of beauty. Raphael's work in the loggia of the Vatican is a splendid example of the arabesque.

Woodworkers adapted these three styles to the furniture of the day, and it is to their credit that they produced harmony, and not confusion. The backs of chairs did not resemble palace doors, nor did the columns of cabinets suggest Greek colonnades. There was a fine sense of fitness between the object and its ornament. Herein was a vast difference between the handiwork of the Renaissance and that of the Gothic period. Gothic furniture as a whole was oppressively architectural. The lids of chests and the doors of cupboards were often church façades in miniature; and the finials of chairs and settles diminutive church spires. Gothic art was ecclesiastical rather than secular, and Gothic furniture, with few exceptions, was fitted for monasteries rather than homes.

The Renaissance raised furniture-making to an art. Pupils were apprenticed to a master and studied with him until they had perfected their craft, when they opened workshops of their own. The pieces produced in these great studio-shops united beauty with

utility. For the first time designs were made with reference to their setting. The furniture of the private dwelling was suggestive of neither cathedrals nor abbeys. It was made with a careful regard for the needs of the owner, his station and manner of living. Thus houses possessed a harmony which had hitherto been absent.

The arrangement of furniture was greatly altered. Chairs and chests were no longer placed stiffly against the walls. According to one old writer the sixteenth century loosened the furniture from the side of the room, and distributed it "here and there in the manner agreeable to modern taste." With its changed position came a change in the construction and character of each article. The cabinet became a cabinet in the modern meaning of the word. It was no longer a press or a cupboard. The table lost its severe lines and plain surfaces, and developed into an ornamental piece of furniture. Wood-carvers, as if to atone for past neglect, lavished their highest skill upon it. The chair was completely transformed. It refused to be classified under one or two heads. There was the chair for the hall, the dining-room, and the bedchamber. It was imposing, simple, massive, or graceful, as the occasion demanded. The upholstered seat was introduced during this period. Hitherto chair cushions were movable; they were now a part of the frame. This was a radical change and gave rise to a new class of workmen—upholsterers.

GOTHIC CHAIR WITH RENAISSANCE DETAILS, PARMA MUSEUM, TRANSITIONAL PERIOD

BEDCHAMBER IN THE VINCIGLIATA, FIESOLE

Among the sixteenth-century pieces of furniture which were unknown at an earlier date was the sideboard. The credence and the dresser have been mentioned. The sideboard was longer and lower than these mediæval pieces and without shelves. One of the earliest references to the sideboard is in the journal of Benvenuto Cellini. To this prince of silversmiths we are indebted for many picturesque glimpses. Sometimes it is an interview with Michaelangelo, sometimes a visit to the pope, sometimes a line about a piece of furniture. "Meanwhile I contrived, by means of a pupil of Raffaello da Urbino, to get an order for one of those great water-vessels called *acquereccia*, which are used for ornaments to place on a sideboard. He wanted a pair made of equal size. One of them he intrusted to Lucagnolo and the other to me."

Another writer of the same period says in a letter: "When I entered the house of Maestro Giovanni, of whom I may have spoken, I was given bread and wine from the sideboard and pressed to lodge for the night." In this letter is a second reference of interest. "On my way out of the city, I fell in with three youths whom I thought to be students. Two were weavers from Palermo, and the third a

STATE DINING-ROOM IN THE VINCIGLIATA, FIESOLE

wood-carver on his way to the palace to receive orders for a marriage-coffer. I hoped to learn more of his errand, but he talked little, and refused to tarry for wine." Unfortunately the letter gives no clue to the palace nor to the noble lady for whom the coffer was intended.

In the list of new furniture was the chest of drawers. This was placed in the bedchamber and was the forerunner of the bureau. During the sixteenth century the bed took on a new form. The massive Gothic bed was no longer tolerated. A lighter, more movable structure superseded it. Slender columns upheld a canopy of brocade or tapestry, and curtains of similar material inclosed the sides. The Renaissance bed was not a four-poster in the colonial acceptance of the word, for the back was completely encased in wood. This headboard, if such it may be called, was richly carved, and occasionally displayed the arms and insignia of the family. The bed in the chamber of the Vincigliata, here illustrated, has exquisitely carved figures, in place of lower columns.

Bedrooms of this period were more comfortable than they had been at any previous time. Panes of glass were no longer a luxury. With larger windows came

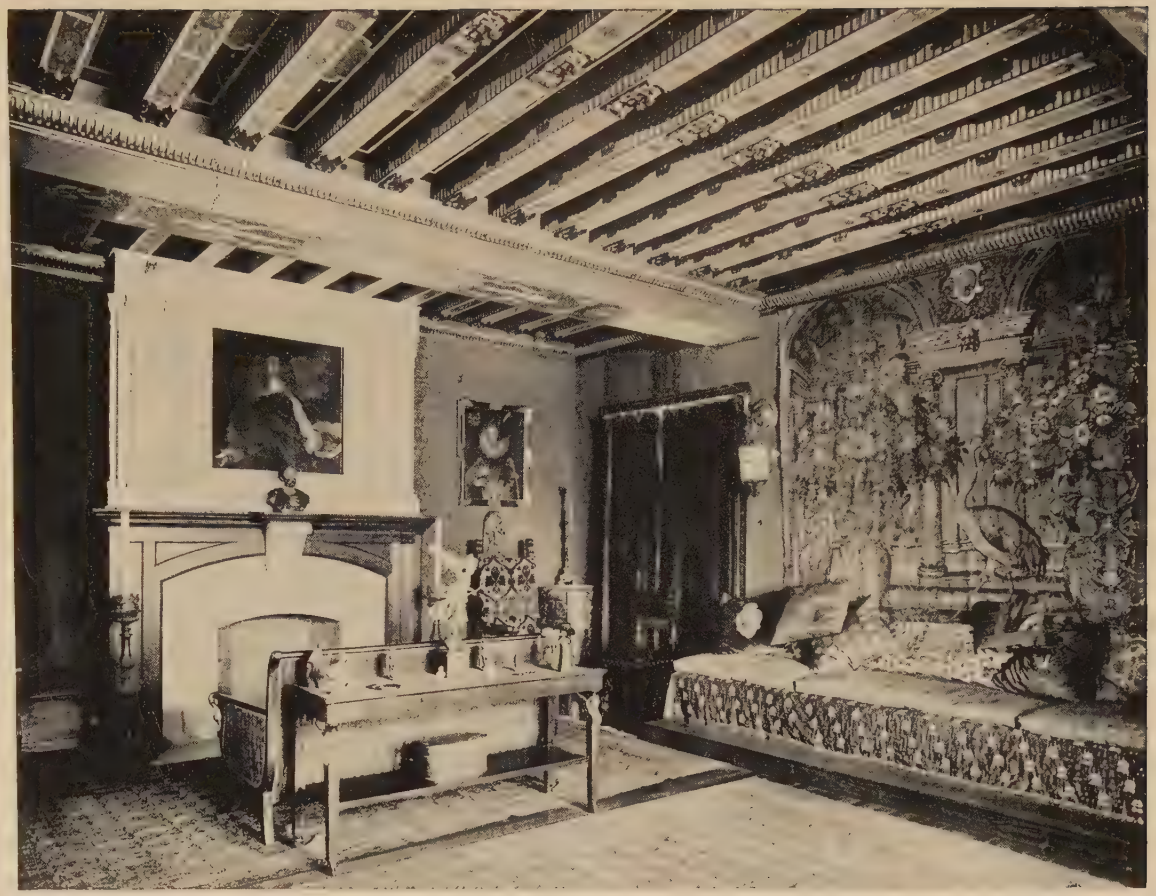
more light and better ventilation. A brighter, happier atmosphere was the result. This changed condition was not confined to the upper story. The lower part of the house was equally transformed. The shadowy corners, the dimly lighted staircases, and the dark passageways were of the past. The perpetual twilight of the mediæval dwelling gave place to the sunshine of the Renaissance.

Among the host of articles which added to the comfort and convenience of the Italian house were clocks, mirrors, and screens. Clocks were not the invention of this century, but they were little used until this period. They were of small dimensions, elaborated, incased in metal, and sometimes ornamented with *pietra-dura*—an inlay of ivory, horn, mother-of-pearl, and lapis lazuli. Screens were of stamped and painted leather, and were usually imported from Spain. Mirrors were of two varieties. The common ones were of polished steel; the more costly ones were of glass. The frames in both instances were of metal and highly decorated. It was in the small furnishings that the art of the house was at fault. Mirror frames, clock cases, and candlesticks passed the border-line of good taste.

Chests gained rather than diminished in importance during this period. They were no longer used as seats, for chairs were abundant. They were no longer needed as receptacles for armor and implements of the chase, for hunting had fallen into disuse, and the sixteenth century was one of peace. The housekeeper did not require them for her household stores, for more convenient pieces of furniture were designed especially for her needs. The family plate was no longer concealed in them, for the silver was displayed on the sideboard by day and hidden in a safe at night.

As dower or marriage coffers, the chests, or *cassoni*, of the Renaissance developed into works of art. Many artists made their reputations in this field alone. The finest *gesso* work, the purest gilding, the most intricate *intarsia*, and the best type of carving entered into the construction of these coffers. The cartouche or pierced shield was often a feature of the carved chest. Acanthus leaves and delicately modeled arabesques were also favorite designs. One Andrea di Cosimo was noted for his skill in adapting the cartouche. Vasari says of him: "It would not be possible to describe the vast number of decorations in coffers and other works of similar kind executed by Andrea di Cosimo, seeing that the whole city is full of them. I must, therefore, decline the enumeration of them, but I cannot omit to mention the circular escutcheons which were prepared by this artist, and to such an extent that there could hardly be a wedding solemnized but that Andrea must have his shops filled with such works, either for one or another of the citizens."

Many coffers were decorated with *gesso*, a composition of paint and gold-leaf. But the most beautiful ones were of *intarsia*. In the fifteenth century *intarsia*, or the inlaying of colored woods etched by hot irons, was little known outside of the



RENAISSANCE BEAMED CEILING, RESIDENCE OF FREDERIC C. BARTLETT, ESQ., CHICAGO

Carthusian monasteries. In the sixteenth century its fame reached the courts of Francois I and Henry VIII. The inlay was composed of natural and dyed woods scorched with hot sand or iron and polished with penetrating oils. Geometrical patterns, copied from mosaics, cinque-cento ornament, landscapes, and figures were executed in this medium. Each artist had his own methods of preparing the colors, and these secrets were carefully guarded. Among the famous workers in *intarsia*, the *intarsia-tori*, as they were called, were Fra Raffaello, Fra Damiano, and Fra Bartolommeo. These men were monks of the Carthusian and Dominican orders but they made marriage-coffers as well as choir stalls and sacristy presses. A notable piece of this sixteenth-century inlay is the screen in the Charter House at Pavia, decorated by Fra Bartolommeo. Another celebrated example is the *chasse* containing the relics of St. Dominic in the church of Bergamo. This work was executed by Fra Damiano, but it is called "Charles V's *intarsia*." When Charles of Spain visited Bergamo he refused to believe that the *chasse* was made of inlaid wood, declaring it was the work of the brush. Nor was he convinced until a piece of the wood was removed. In memory of this occasion, and the tribute paid to the monk's skill, the wood was never replaced. Many museums and private collections contain beautiful specimens of this Renaissance inlay, notable specimens being in the Vincigliata.

Situated on high land, overlooking Florence and Fiesole, is the Castello di Vincigliata, rich in sixteenth-century treasures. The present owner is an American, Mr. John Temple Leader, who has spent a fortune in restoring it. Although the castle is no longer used as a dwelling there is no suggestion of a museum in the arrangement of Mr. Leader's collection which includes furniture of unusual beauty, rare pieces of silver and bronze, and exquisite enamels, faïence, and glass. Part of the building antedates the Renaissance, and the rooms in this section have been sympathetically treated. The ceilings are particularly fine and range from late mediæval types to those of the sixteenth century.

Ceilings and side walls during the Renaissance were treated in a masterly manner. Architects adapted the vaulted ceiling to new conditions and transformed the flat Gothic type into a thing of beauty. One treatment of the flat ceiling consisted of horizontal beams, another of cross-beaming. The sunken panels formed by the latter scheme were ornamented by carved rosettes in high relief. This treatment was a revival of the coffered ceiling of the Romans and became one of the most characteristic features of the Renaissance house. When left in the natural colors of the wood it was very harmonious. In the typical dwelling of the sixteenth century it was seldom painted. In the palace the rosettes were usually of gold set in a colored background.

Usually, when one wishes concrete examples of Renaissance decoration, he must

RENAISSANCE COFFERED CEILING, RESIDENCE OF THE LATE WILLIAM C. WHITNEY, ESQ.

RENAISSANCE CARVING

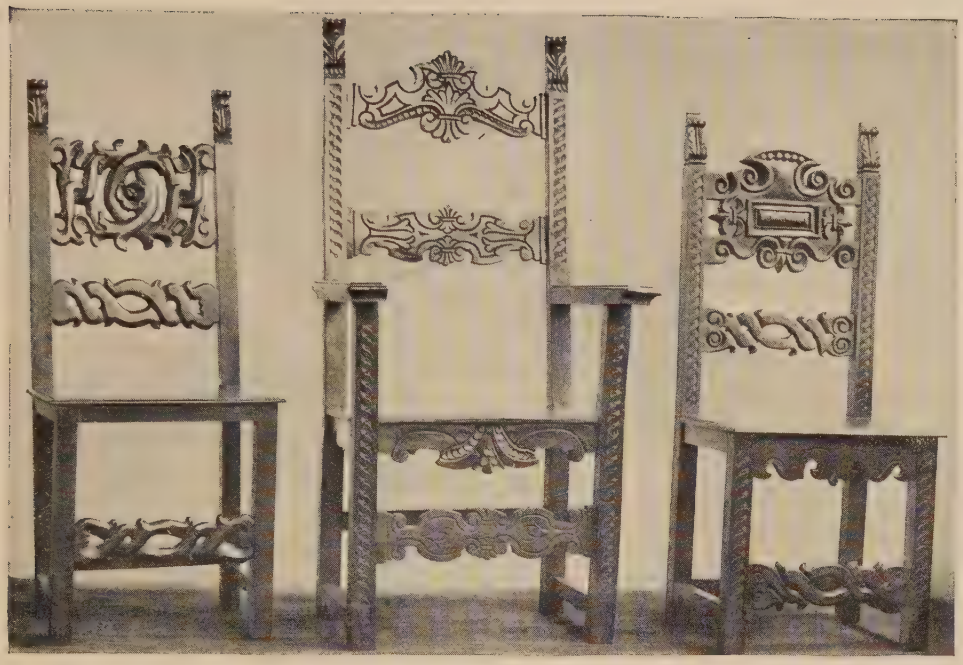
turn to the homes of princes. In the palaces of Rome, Florence, Naples, and Venice every fifteenth and sixteenth century type of ceiling is represented. Some are very fine, others are too ornate to be beautiful. Florentine palaces are simpler in architecture and furnishings than those of any other Italian city, and consequently Florentine ceilings are more worthy of study. In the Riccardi Palace built by Michelozzi, for Cosimo de' Medici the Elder, and famous as being the birthplace of Lorenzo the Magnificent, are ceilings of great merit, and notable ones are in the Strozzi and Gondi palaces.

A beautiful example of horizontal beaming is shown in the music-room of Dorfred House, the residence of Frederic C. Bartlett, Esq., Chicago. In the William C. Whitney house, New York city, are several ceilings of the coffered class. This American mansion is truer to the Renaissance than many Italian palaces. The latter have suffered from vandalism, and scarcely less from unfortunate restoration. The Whitney interiors are very consistent.

Celebrated ceilings are in the ducal palaces of Mantua, Genoa and Venice, but, as a whole, they are very elaborate. Venetian decorators treated the ceiling as an independent thing, giving it a prominence which was fatal to the proportions of the room. They painted pictures in all the available spaces which detracted from the importance of the side walls and spoiled the harmony of floor, walls, and ceiling, which was one of the great principles of Renaissance decoration.

Paneling formed a part of the woodwork of the sixteenth-century Italian house, but it did not cover the wall so completely as in many English houses. It had the character of a high wainscoting divided into long, plain panels, headed with smaller ones, carved in low relief. Above the woodwork tapestry extended to the cornice. During this period tapestry becomes a part of the wall. Hitherto it had

DOOR OF THE VATICAN
Designed by Raphael



CARVED CHAIRS IN THE LUCCA MUSEUM, EARLY SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

been simply a hanging, fastened at the top and moving with every wind that passed through the room. "Look for hidden foes behind the arras," was an old proverb which now lost its significance.

Tapestries were woven in great quantities in Genoa, Venice, and Palermo. The Gobelin weaves were comparatively new, as the industry, founded by Jean Gobelin was in its infancy, but Lille and Arras had been pouring the products of their looms into Italy for generations. Arras had given to the Italian language a new word, *arrazzi* and this term, in a general way, was applied to all textile hangings. Brocades, velvets, and decorated leathers were sometimes used in palaces, and again, the space above the panels was filled with mural paintings. But the every-day room—the room in the citizen's house—depended on the soft-toned tapestry of Palermo and Genoa for a background, and as no pictures were placed against it, the result was very satisfactory.

Pictures were the luxury of the rich. The citizen's house, therefore, possessed a harmony which the home of the patrician lacked. Tapestry was little fitted to display paintings. The richly framed pictures, when brought into contact with the richly figured walls, produced an effect of over-decoration which was ruinous

to the unity of the room. The walls were sufficiently pictorial in themselves, and escaped being too decorative by the subdued color schemes of the weavers.

Mediæval colors were glaring; those of the Renaissance were rich and somber. Venetian red, Gobelin blue, the golden browns and deep yellows of Palermo, and the silvery greens of Genoa were among the colors chosen by the tapestry-makers. It remained for a later and French taste to introduce the pale, cold colors, and the glittering gold which annihilated harmony and spoiled the relation of walls and furniture.

Against the low-toned tapestry, wainscoted in Italian walnut, the furniture of the day had its true setting. Brought in juxtaposition with the garish colors of the *baroque* period it lost its real character, and became too heavily carved for beauty. Perhaps no other style of furniture loses so much in being separate from its legitimate surroundings as that of the Italian Renaissance. For this reason museum pieces and isolated cabinets and chairs in a modern house give little hint of their one-time dignity. In the Renaissance house the furniture was merely a detail in the general scheme of furnishing, and as such it was nearly perfect.

Designs of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries maintained the high standard set by the early Renaissance furniture-makers. Carving was intricate but was executed in low relief, and the various quatro-cento and cinque-cento *motifs* were kept carefully apart. The chairs of the early seventeenth century, illustrated on page 47, show that at that late day the simple tre-cento ornament was skilfully handled, and there are many other pieces of similar date which show the same restrained treatment. One type of furniture had disappeared. The transition pieces combining Gothic and Renaissance principles were extinct. No two styles were less fitted to go together, and no furniture was so painfully ugly as that which united Renaissance ornament and Gothic construction. Be it said in favor of the Italians, that this combination was never common except in monasteries where Gothic tradition was almost a religion. The chair on page 39 is a good example of the grafting of Renaissance details on Gothic framework, using *good* in the sense of typical.

Upholstered chairs in the seventeenth century formed a distinct class. In the early sixteenth century the cushioned seat was set in a frame of wood to which was added later a cushioned back. Gradually the frame of the chair was hidden by the upholstery of brocade, tapestry, or leather until the arms and supports alone were visible. This type was well illustrated at the Exposition of Arts and Industries held in Lucca a few years ago when, in addition to many beautiful modern articles, was exhibited a rare collection of Renaissance furniture. Many pieces were contributedby old Italian families, and were shown to the public for the first time. The exhibition was especially rich in carved and upholstered chairs.

DESK AND CHAIR USED BY SAVONAROLA, MUSEUM OF ST. MARK, FLORENCE

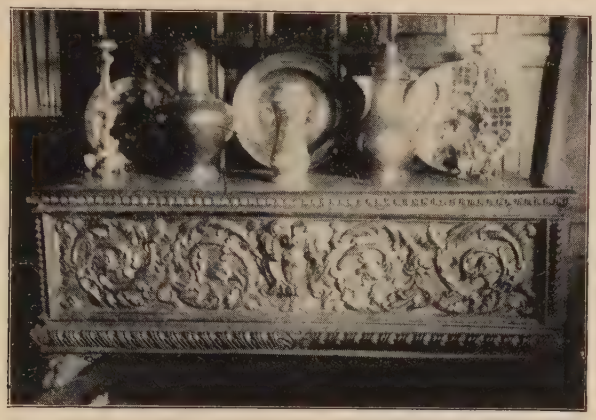
SCREEN OF INTARSIA, PAVIA
Work of Fra Bartolommeo

The carved chair of Italian walnut reproduced on page 38 was loaned from the collection of the Mansi palace of Lucca, as were also the chest of drawers and the fine sixteenth-century cabinet with its priceless old porcelains shown on pages 36 and 37. This cabinet originally had a plain door of wood. The Renaissance furniture-maker was an artist and he realized that a piece so heavily carved should have a solid door, concealing and not displaying the treasures within. It was a nineteenth-century cabinet-maker who added the glass front.

The Mansi chair is worthy of study, as it represents a type which has grown to be accepted as characteristic of the Renaissance. Modern furniture-makers have copied its narrow back and high seat, and have made it a medium for jig-saw carving and glued ornament. It was merely an anteroom chair in the sixteenth century, and was not tolerated long by the Italians, although it was in high favor in England as evidenced by the many examples in English museums. A strange fatality has given prominence to this least desirable of Renaissance designs, and emphasizes the fact that in furniture the survival is not always of the fittest. The dignified arm-chairs and the fine, simple, straight-back chairs, illustrated on page 47, have been overlooked by modern wood-workers. The Renaissance table has never had justice done to its beautiful lines and restrained ornament, although the *baroque* table of the late seventeenth century has been made the theme of countless reproductions. When furniture-makers discarded the solid side supports of the Renaissance table they sought to hide defective construction with meaningless carving. The table with four separate legs was yet to come. The old forms with heavy standards and long foot-boards were passing away. The transitional table was not beautiful, although the result achieved in another century was well worth the struggle.

The *baroque* period was the waning Renaissance and corresponded with the *rococo* period in France. The final illustration in this chapter is a typical Italian example.

Two pieces of furniture which assumed an important place in the late seventeenth century were unknown in the early Renaissance house, and these were the bookcase and the writing-desk. Bookcases, in the earlier period, were made exclusively for the great libraries of Italy, and writing-desks were the property of monks and

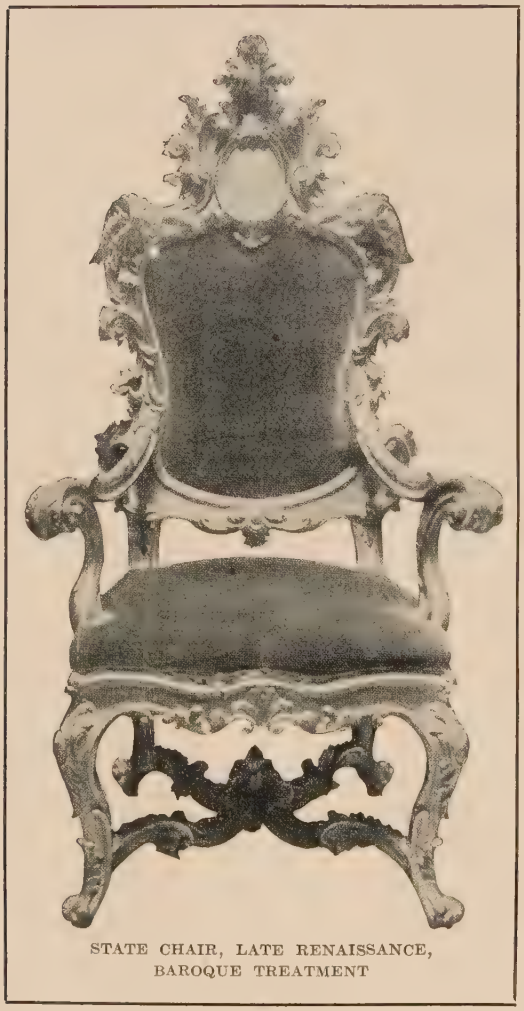


FLORENTINE MARRIAGE COFFER

scribes. In the Museum of St. Mark in Florence is exhibited the desk used by Savonarola. It has not a line of decoration, a scrap of carving. The monks ornamented their chairs and benches, but their desks were as severe as their lives. Savonarola's desk is beautiful in its straight lines and plain surfaces, and aside from its connection with the great Dominican, has value as a piece of Renaissance woodwork. The *curule* shown with the desk is interesting. It is sold in replica all over Florence as "Savonarola's chair," the Roman origin being overshadowed by its association with the great Florentine.

The couch as distinguished from the bed was a product of the Renaissance.

A FINE EXAMPLE OF RENAISSANCE CARVING



STATE CHAIR, LATE RENAISSANCE, BAROQUE TREATMENT

It was placed in the bedroom and, like many of the coffers, was ornamented with *intarsia* and *gesso*. Vasari, in writing of *gesso* decoration, says: "And this custom prevailed to such an extent for many years that the most distinguished masters employed themselves in painting and gilding. Nor were they ashamed of this occupation. The truth of what is here said may be seen at this day in the chambers of the magnificent Lorenzo, on which were depicted, not by men of the common race of painters, all the jousts given by the duke."

Furniture-making owed not a little of its prestige to the patronage of the Medici family, and scarcely less to the powerful Sforza family of Milan, the Gonzaga of Mantua, the Farnese of Rome, and the Doria and Spinola houses of Genoa. The cities of Italy were governed by men who vied with each other in fostering the arts. They were not all of noble birth, but they wielded a power equaled by few princes of the blood. A family numbering in its ranks such figures as Cosimo the Elder, Lorenzo the Magnificent, Clement VII, and Leo X had little to fear from royalty. When the glory of this family declined the arts of Florence declined also. And what was true of Florence was true of Genoa, of Milan, and of Rome. The late seventeenth century sounded the death-knell of the Renaissance. Fine art was dead, for the last of the masters had passed away. Liberal art, more dependent on its patrons than fine art, deteriorated with the waning influence of those great families who had created standards of taste. The work of the stone-cutter, the silversmith, and the furniture-maker became a weak imitation of former beauty.

CHAPTER V

FURNITURE OF THE FRENCH RENAISSANCE

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE STYLE: A TRANSITIONAL PERIOD SIMILAR TO THAT OF ITALY BUT OF LONGER DURATION, GOTHIC ART BEING MORE FIRMLY ROOTED IN FRANCE THAN IN THE SOUTH. THE ORNAMENT OF THE FRENCH RENAISSANCE WAS IN A LIGHTER VEIN AND LESS DEPENDENT ON ANTIQUE MODELS. DELICATE ARABESQUES AND PIERCED SHIELDS WERE USED BY FURNITURE-MAKERS AND DECORATORS. LATER IN THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY WOOD-CARVERS COMBINED AN INTERLACED RIBBON ORNAMENT WITH THE LOZENGE AND THE CARTOUCHE, WHICH WAS FOLLOWED BY THE INTRODUCTION OF THE SHELL AND THE ORNATE SCROLL. FROM THAT DATE FURNITURE-MAKING DECLINED IN SIMPLICITY.

CHAPTER V

FURNITURE OF THE FRENCH RENAISSANCE

IT was during the reign of Charles VIII that the influence of the Italian Renaissance extended to France. With the accession of this monarch began the long wars with Naples and Milan which ended with the extinction of the house of Valois. Charles's campaign in Italy gained neither lands nor glory for France, but it laid the foundation of the French Renaissance.

"The new birth" in France may be divided into the following epochs: First, Transition, 1453–1515, including the reigns of Charles VIII and Louis XII; second, François I, 1515–1547; third, Henri II and Henri IV, 1547–1610; fourth, Louis XIII, 1610–1643.

The first epoch was Renaissance in detail only; the construction was purely Gothic. The fourth was the waning Renaissance when a threadbare tradition remained. The strongest period was the century 1515–1610, covered by the reigns of five sovereigns, three of whom left an indelible impress on the arts of the day. François I, Henri II, and Henri IV created epochs; François II, Charles IX, and Henri III did little for the honor of France and less for art. The forty-two years encompassed by the reigns of these three monarchs, last of the house of Valois, were among the blackest in history. Little that was notable was produced in France between the death of Henri II and the accession of Henri of Navarre.

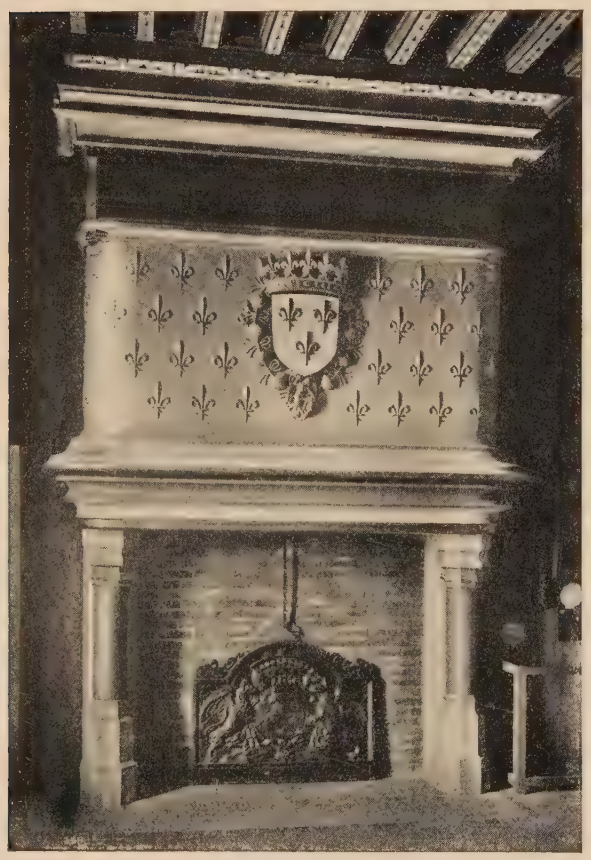
During the thirty odd years that François I occupied the throne, more was done for the artistic development of France than had been accomplished in the combined reigns of Charles VII, Louis XI, Charles VIII, and Louis XII, who had ruled for nearly a century.

François came to his inheritance when the nation was ripe for a great art revival, and he had the wit to seize the opportunity, and the brains and wealth to make the most of it. His ambition was to raise France to an equality with Italy and to this end he invited great architects and painters to his court.

Italy was divided into countless kingdoms and dukedoms, but France was practically a united country. Italy had her Florentine school, her Venetian school, her schools of Siena, Milan, and Naples. The art of France was centralized in Paris. François called to his aid the greatest lights of Italy and Flanders, and began the series of magnificent châteaux which to-day bear witness to his munificence. Hundreds of native designers were employed in building Chambord, Chenonceau, and Fontainebleau, who worked under the guidance of such men as Serlio and Vignola,

Primaticcio, Leonardo da Vinci, Andrea del Sarto, and Benvenuto Cellini. Among the illustrious Frenchmen who joined forces with the Italian architects and decorators, and later formed the national school, were Bullant, Lescot, and Delorme.

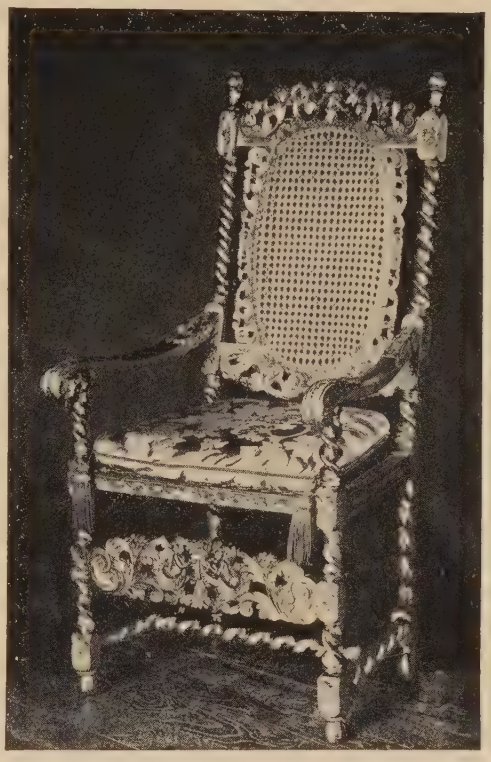
Besides building royal residences François remodeled the Louvre and added several rooms to the château of Blois which had been partially restored by Louis XII. In Chambord the architecture of a feudal stronghold was blended with Renaissance details. In Fontainebleau a more consistent plan was followed. The interior of Chambord was demolished during the French Revolution, but Fontainebleau, in spite of its checkered history, remains to-day the truest example of the French Renaissance. Many stirring events have had this historic palace for a background. In one of the rooms the revocation of the Edict of Nantes was signed; in another Monaldeschi was murdered; and in the great gallery of Diana occurred the death of Condé in 1686. Here years later the sentence of divorce was passed on Josephine; and here in the court of Henri IV, Napoleon parted with his Old Guard. Fontainebleau was alternately a royal dwelling, a military school, and a papal residence. Henri II and Henri IV did much to beautify it; Louis XIII was born within its walls but seldom lived there; Louis XIV cared little for it; and Louis XV shunned it altogether. Napoleon revived its splendor for a brief period and Louis Philippe spent a royal fortune in restoring it. Thanks to Louis Philippe the Fontainebleau of to-day is a faithful representation of the Fontainebleau of the



LOUIS XII FIREPLACE, CHÂTEAU OF BLOIS

sixteenth century. Much of the woodwork is the same and many of the frescoes have been merely retouched. The fireplaces and mantels have been restored from sketches and plans which had been carefully preserved.

The woodwork of the French Renaissance differed materially from Italian woodwork of the same period. The ornament was in a lighter vein, the carving more open, and less dependent on antique models. Even when the work was executed by Italian designers it was imbued with the French spirit. This is especially noticeable in the treatment of doors and chimney-pieces.



RENAISSANCE CHAIR, CHÂTEAU OF BLOIS

The fireplaces in Blois and Fontainebleau show with what a masterly hand the workmen of the early Renaissance wielded wood and stone. A Louis XII fireplace of stone is reproduced herewith. On a field of fleur-de-lis is a shield ornamented by a crown and surrounded by schallop shells. In another portion of the stonework is the pierced porcupine, Louis XII's emblem, combined with the ermine of Anne of Brittany. The uniting of royal emblems is seen in many of the rooms of this château. The salamander of François I and the monogram of Claude, his wife, daughter of Louis XII, occur over and over. The swan pierced with the dagger, Claude's insignia is also a frequent *motif*.

The chimney-piece of the room in Blois, illustrated on page 59, shows the charm and delicacy of the "François Premier" style. This salon was decorated for Queen Claude and the initials C and F interlaced with crowns are conspicuous in the carving. The intricate low relief is characteristic of the early Renaissance. The fireplace in the gallery of Henri II, reproduced on page 61, is one of the most famous in France. The royal arms, more elaborately executed than in the Louis XII mantel, occupy the center of the chimney-breast. The frescoes were originally painted by Primaticcio and his pupil Abbate and later restored by Jean Alaux.

Henri's initial inclosed in a crescent, the emblem of Diane de Poitiers, is a favorite *motif* in the decoration. Four crescents encircling fleur-de-lis adorn the fireplace and are repeated over the doors. The ornamentation above the mantel contains a hint of the interlaced lines and bands which were destined to become a marked feature of the Henri II style in both woodwork and furniture. The development of "strap-work" is an interesting phase of Renaissance ornament. It originated in Italy, but was less favored by the Italians than by the the French and English. In England during the reign of Elizabeth this form of carving was used so extensively that it is to-day largely associated with the name of that sovereign. "Elizabethan strap-work" is the name given to the pierced and scrolled woodwork of this period.

Less remarkable in an architectural way than the François I period the Henri II surpassed it in the industrial arts. Furniture, textiles, porcelains, and book-bindings were triumphs of artistic achievement. Jean Grolier, in his exquisite bindings, carried the intersecting ribbon ornamentation to a high degree of beauty, suggesting the interlaced work of old Celtic and Saracenic patterns. The exquisite Oiron faïence, better known as "Henri Deux ware," was decorated with this scheme of ornament. In the intricate strap-and-band decoration furniture-makers found an extensive field for ingenuity. The pierced shield, the lozenge, the flat cartouche, were combined with interlaced lines in countless ways. Grotesque heads in low relief were also used in connection with strap-work, particularly in cabinets, presses, and armoires. In the Cluny Museum is a mourning cabinet belonging to Diane de Poitiers, ornamented with bands of interlacing ribbons painted in dull colors. Another cabinet with similar decorations came from Clairvaux Abbey. A chest with Henri's monogram has narrow lines of marquetry in a pattern that might have been a direct copy of a book-cover. There are three coffers in the Louvre, and two in Fontainebleau, which display this handling.

In the cabinet furniture-makers found the finest medium for their talents. So long as ornament was controlled and made subordinate to the design, every piece of carving from the hand of the French designer was a thing of beauty. Delicate arabesques and the more severe strap-work appeared to great advantage in the cabinet. The construction of this article gave scope for a treatment which was impossible in the bed, the chair, or the table. What the chest was in the hands of the mediæval craftsman, the cabinet became in the hands of the furniture-maker of the French Renaissance; it was the highest exponent of the craftsman's skill. Fontainebleau, Blois, the Louvre, and the Cluny contain many beautiful specimens of this period, roughly spanned by the years 1550 and 1600.

In this country there are fine specimens in museums and private collections, but they lose much in being separated from their original setting—a remark that may be made in reference to all Renaissance furniture. In the Lawrence room in

FIREPLACE BUILT FOR CLAUDE, WIFE OF FRANÇOIS I, CHÂTEAU OF BLOIS

the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, an admirable effect is gained by the use of Renaissance panels which line the walls. Against this background the carved cabinets, the chairs, and the pieces of fine armor have a consistent setting. Much of Benvenuto Cellini's work is here in replica. The shield and helmet made for François I and the suit of armor belonging to Henri II, designed by Cellini and executed by his pupil Pilon, are both exhibited. Pilon equaled Cellini in strength, and Cousin and Jean Goujon surpassed him in delicacy. In the andirons of the many fireplaces of Fontainebleau and Blois may be seen the skill and ingenuity of French metal-workers.

When Henri IV came to the throne the sixteenth century was nearing its close. Under Henri III the arts had declined. Henri of Navarre revived the glories of Fontainebleau and gave a renewed impetus to the industries of France. But times had changed and the creative force of the Renaissance was gone. Henri's queen, Marie de' Medici, cared little for French taste and sought to introduce Italian workmen at court. Furniture of her reign was either imported from Italy or patterned closely on Italian models. Venetian brocades and Genoese velvets replaced French and Flemish tapestries. Architecture, so far as the queen had a voice in the matter, was decidedly Italian. After Henri's death Marie commissioned Jacques Debrosse to build the Luxembourg. The exterior was planned after the Pitti palace, the queen's early home, and remains an interesting architectural monument to this remarkable woman.

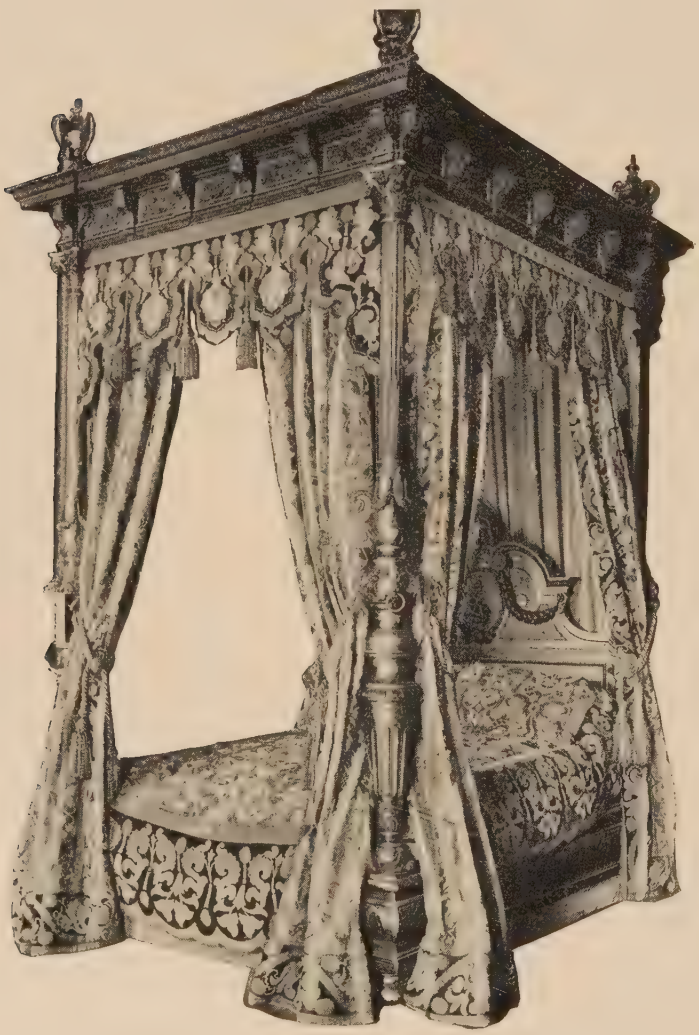
In the château of Blois is a chamber where Marie de' Medici passed the bitter hours of her captivity. It has been described by Richard Sudbury in his delightful book, *Two Gentlemen in Touraine*:

"We turned with some reluctance from the scene without and the thoughts which it had inspired, to enter the apartments of Henri III. These occupy the whole of the upper floor; and if they are barren of their former furniture, they may at least boast a wealth of old and historical associations connected with the times of Catherine and her cousin Marie de' Medici. The whole suite, consisting of halls, of private rooms and galleries, overlooking the town, is in a perfect state of restoration. The French government has devoted much time and money to the preservation of old designs and styles of decoration. Everywhere the blue and yellow polished tiles, representing the or and azure of heraldry, are noticeable in their ever-changing designs upon the floor. The thick beams of the ceiling, decorated in the manner peculiar to the Renaissance, blend with that of the walls, and make us believe that it is yesterday in which we are living rather than to-day. A beautiful little chamber leads out to the private chapel of the king. It is lined with tiny wooden panels, two hundred and forty in number, which are of different design and highly ornamented in gold and brown. The ceiling is so similar

FIREPLACE IN THE GALLERY OF HENRI II, FONTAINEBLEAU

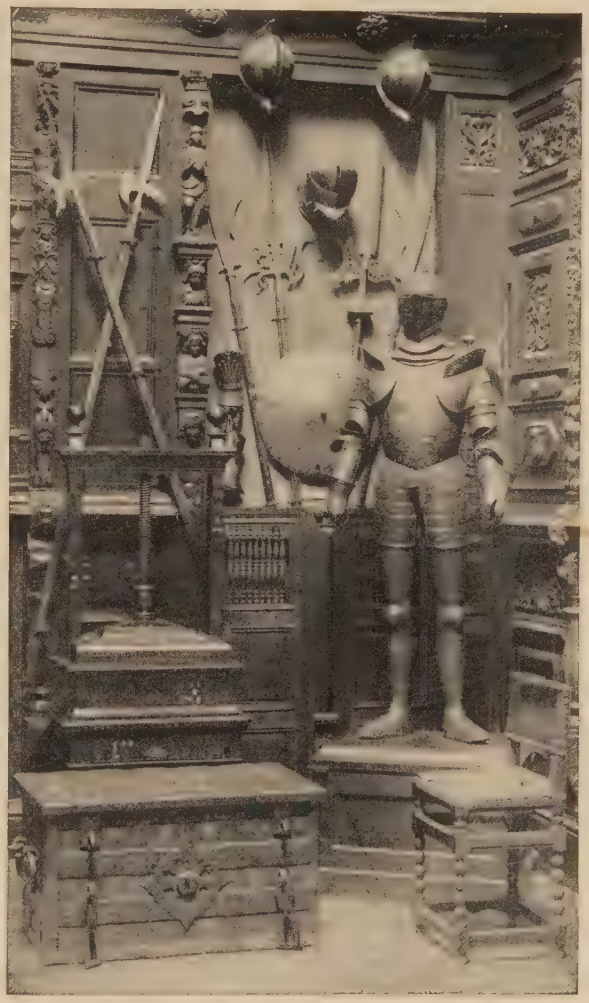
to the walls that it gives to the whole the appearance of a little jewel-box built to inclose some royal gem. And indeed it did once long ago, for hard by is a window where Marie de' Medici, escaped after twenty years of captivity in this chamber."

Women wielded a powerful influence on the arts of France during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Pious Anne of Brittany, renowned for her *Book of Hours,* cannot be reckoned as an important figure of her day so far as the arts are concerned, but a queen of the following reign, the second wife of François I, cannot be thus dismissed. Eleanor of Portugal, sister of Charles V, most famous monarch of his time after François himself, was notable in a century of notable women. Her interest in the development of French architecture and decorative art was very keen. Catherine de' Medici's talents were largely expended on court intrigues, but Diane de Poitiers was an important factor in molding taste in the reign of Henri II. In the waning days of the Renaissance Anne of Austria was a great patron of the arts.



BEDSTEAD BELONGING TO ANNE OF AUSTRIA, FONTAINEBLEAU

Anne's bedchamber is one of the most sumptuous of the apartments in Fontainebleau. The room is hung with Gobelin tapestries and is magnificently furnished. The chairs are upholstered in Beauvais. The tables and cabinets are inlaid in elaborate patterns and ornamented with delicate carvings. Rare vases and urns are scattered through the apartment. The effect is bewildering. Everything is figured, everything is full of motion and color. The tapestries and paintings depict the most stirring events. There is nothing restful about the room, except the bed which against a quieter background would arouse enthusiasm. It is a particularly fine specimen. The columns are well proportioned and treated architecturally with bases and capitals. There is no foot-board and the head-board is lower than in the bed of the previous century. The wooden canopy is part of the design and is richly carved. The hangings are of a unique pattern, woven especially for Queen Anne. Many royal heads have rested beneath the carved canopy and one papal one. Between the years 1812 and 1814 Pius VII was imprisoned in Fontainebleau. Many objects of interest belonging to him are exhibited in another room, the most interesting being a bronze reliquary, a gold and ivory crucifix, and a small clock studded with cameos, given by the pope to Napoleon.



RENAISSANCE PANELING. REPLICA OF ARMOR BELONGING TO HENRI II, EXECUTED BY PILON. DUTCH CHAIR. MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS, BOSTON

The chandelier in Anne's bedchamber belongs to the late Louis XIII period and is oppressivelv gorgeous. Beneath each candle-holder is a huge pendant of crystal which glitters like a mammoth diamond. A comparison of the French chandelier with the Italian one of the day shows how superior the latter is in design and workmanship.

Louis XIV carried the golden glitter of the chandelier a point further than did Louis XIII, and Louis XV made it an excuse for every fantastic bit of ornament. Louis XVI restored it to an earlier simplicity, and Napoleon gave to it a Spartan severity. These various styles may be studied in Fontainebleau. From François I to Louis Philippe the palace is an epitome of the history of interior decoration. Seven historic periods, covering four centuries, are represented within its walls.

During the Henri IV period the shell, as a *motif* in wood-carving, came into prominence. At first its use was confined to finials of chairs and cabinets where it was extremely effective. During Louis XIII's reign the shell passed into another stage of its existence. It formed a part of nearly every piece of furniture, and was repeated in the decoration of doors and mantels. With the abuse of the shell began the long reign of rococo ornament—literally rock and shell—*rocaille et coquille*—which was one of the most remarkable in the history of decoration.

Simon Vouet, who bore somewhat the same relation to Louis XIII that his pupil, Lebrun, did to Louis XIV, was largely responsible for the florid ornamentation of the late Renaissance in France. He used the heavily scrolled cartouche, the fancy pilaster, the ponderous garland of fruits and flowers, the round cherub face and the fantastic shell. Doors and mantels were oppressively ornate and furniture, in order to conform to the same architectural scheme, was equally florid.

The best furniture of this period—the middle of the seventeenth century—was of Flemish design. Furniture-makers were divided into two groups; those who followed the lead of Simon Vouet whose inspiration was of Italian origin, and those who clung to the simpler sturdy designs popular in the Low Countries. Thus the furniture of the Louis XIII epoch represents two types. The first was undoubtedly more in tune with the ornate decorative schemes of the day; the second was unquestionably the more beautiful, though always a little incongruous with gilded walls. The direct Flemish influence of the late French Renaissance has been attributed to Rubens who visited Paris at the request of Marie de' Medici in the early part of the seventeenth century. This influence strengthened in the succeeding reign and did not end until the Louis XIV style was well established.

The furniture of Louis XIII's time was much more varied than that of the preceding reign. There were sets of chairs; six or twelve single chairs, four arm-chairs, and two sofas—all constructed on the same lines and upholstered in the same manner. Designs in stuffs had changed. Bouquets, knots of ribbon, and garlands

LOUIS XIII ROOM, FONTAINEBLEAU

of flowers replaced the small and more classic patterns. Life was growing more luxurious and it was transforming furniture. It was not only transforming, it was creating. The divan with high curved back, padded with velvet or brocade, was the product of Louis XIII's reign; so also was the console.

Prints and illuminations of the time of Louis XIII show a variety of chairs—chairs for the master of the house, the mistress, the children, and special shapes for the servants. Litchfield says that the word "chaise," as a diminutive for "chaire," found its way into the French vocabulary at this period.

With the inauguration of the scroll and shell a different form of arm-chair came into existence. The seat was lower, the arms more curving, the upholstery more comfortable. Severity of line was lost and with it the beauty of line also. To balance the broader and deeper seat, larger supports were necessary, and these gave to the chair a heaviness which the light and delicate ornament accentuated.

This description applies to the French chair of Italian origin. The Flemish chair had a high seat, a comparatively low back, and turned legs connected by strong, rectangular braces. The French chair was supported by an X-brace, terminating in the center with a scroll. The chair designated as the "Regency of Anne of Austria," illustrated in Chapter IX, is a refined type of this style. The chair on page 57 combines the best characteristics of early seventeenth-century Flemish and French designing. Here is admirable construction united with admirable ornamentation. The outlines are Flemish but not extreme Flemish. The seat is lower and the back is higher than in many Flemish chairs of the period. The carving is French but is applied after the manner of the Flemish craftsmen. The turned legs and carved brace are Flemish, too, but treated with French delicacy. The presence of the cane back is worthy of note, for it is seldom found in French chairs of this period. The cane back was a characteristic feature of the Flemish chair of the late seventeenth century and in various guises was known in England, Italy, and Spain. The chair in Blois is a particularly attractive example, and illustrates the fact that in an age of excessive decoration there was an occasional designer who could follow the dictates of fashion and yet keep his work free from extravagance. In the Salon Louis XIII are chairs which illustrate the point in hand. They are built on prescribed lines but are severely plain. The circular X-brace is without carving and the arms are straighter than in many chairs of the day. There is no hint of the shell or the acanthus leaf in any part of the construction.

This lofty apartment was decorated and furnished for Henri IV whose initials, combined with those of Marie de' Medici, are still visible in the painted cornice. The walls are divided into small panels painted with flowers and landscapes, and separated by carved borders. The large pictures form a permanent part of the

decoration, and are the work of Ambroise Du Bois. These huge canvases were painted for Henri IV and represent scenes from the story of Theagenes and Charicles. Between the pictures are carved arabesques of fruit and flowers picked out in gold. The room does not equal the gallery of Henri II in Fontainebleau, nor can it approach in simple grandeur the large apartment built by François I in the château of Blois.

The tables in this salon are noteworthy, for they exhibit a delicacy unknown in the Italian table of the day. The detached legs are held in place with a slight connecting base. The ornament is extremely refined. As the trestle table gave place to the bolt-and-slot table, and that to the table of the Renaissance, and that in turn to the hideous baroque table, so the French table of the early seventeenth century, faulty as it was in design, was slowly approaching the beautiful table of the eighteenth century, when, free from base-boards and connecting rods, it stood on four independent supports. The result was an English production of the eighteenth century, but the French had a part in its evolution.

CABINET, LATE RENAISSANCE

Before Louis XIII's long reign was over the Renaissance had run its course. The history of ornament is the history of furniture and both repeat themselves. From a debased type slowly arose a vital one which, after shaking off the chrysalis stage, remained consistent for a brief period, then declined, and was finally superseded by a new force which in turn shared the fate of its predecessor. This waxing and waning continued until the early part of the nineteenth century when historic furniture, in the strict sense of the term, ceased to exist.

CHAPTER VI

FURNITURE-MAKING IN GERMANY AND THE LOW COUNTRIES

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE STYLE: IN FLANDERS AND HOLLAND AFTER A BRIEF PERIOD OF ASSIMILATION THE RENAISSANCE DEVELOPED ON ORIGINAL LINES. WOOD CARVERS ADAPTED THE ARABESQUE AND THE CARTOUCHE TO A SIMPLER, STURDIER FORM OF ORNAMENT THAN WAS KNOWN IN FRANCE AND ITALY. HEADS AND GROTESQUE MASKS WERE INTRODUCED INTO CABINET WORK, BUT ALWAYS WITH MARKED EFFECT. THE DUTCH EXCELLED IN MARQUETRY, AND THE FLEMINGS IN THE USE OF CANE, BOTH PHASES OF WORK EXERTING A POWERFUL INFLUENCE ON THE FURNITURE-MAKING OF OTHER COUNTRIES. DURING THE EARLY SIXTEENTH CENTURY THE GERMANS COMBINED RENAISSANCE DETAILS WITH GOTHIC CONSTRUCTION. LATER A MORE CONSISTENT TYPE WAS ESTABLISHED IN WHICH FINE METAL WORK WAS CONSPICUOUS.

CHAPTER VI

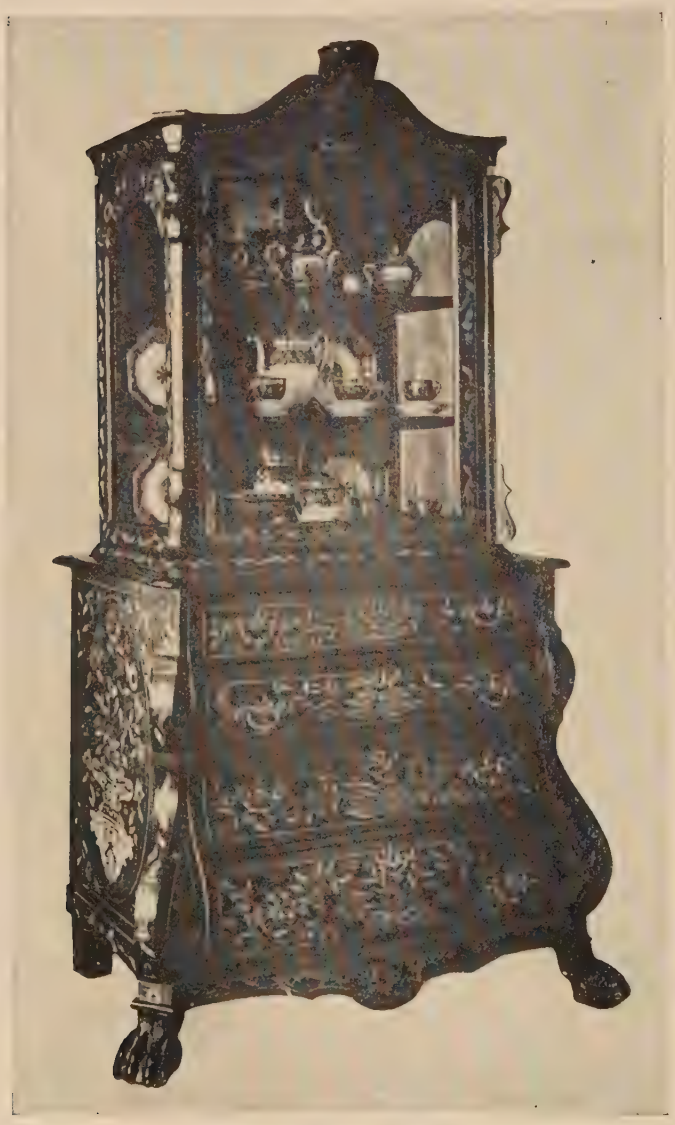
FURNITURE-MAKING IN GERMANY AND THE LOW COUNTRIES

THE close connection politically between Flanders, Spain, and Germany brought about a curious affinity between the various phases of the Renaissance known as Flemish, Spanish, and German. Charles, king of Spain was emperor of Germany, and also count of Flanders and duke of Burgundy. The intercourse between Spain and the Low Countries had for several centuries been very intimate. When Marie of Burgundy married Archduke Maximilian, Austria became a part of the royal circle which now included Spain, Germany, Holland, and Flanders. By this marriage the Low Countries were annexed to the Austrian crown, a rich possession at this period of the world's history.

The development of the Renaissance in Holland and Flanders, with its subsequent influence on the handicraft of other nations, is one of the most interesting chapters in the history of industrial art. Holland and Flanders accepted the movement tardily and never succumbed to it as did the French and the Italians. Just as Gothic ornament remained beautiful in the Low Countries long after it had become extravagant in France, so the ornament of the Renaissance remained coherent long after it had become grotesque in France and England.

Holland and Flanders reversed the usual order of Renaissance development. The early and middle periods were less creditable than the later phases. The Italians and the French achieved their triumphs before the advent of the seventeenth century, but the Dutch and the Flemings brought their work to perfection after the year 1600. If the English were the great furniture-makers of the eighteenth century, the inhabitants of the Low Countries were the great furniture-makers of the seventeenth. The part that Holland and Flanders played in England's triumphs cannot be overestimated. The late Jacobean and the Queen Anne styles, both of which were a preparation for the great eighteenth-century styles, were of Dutch origin.

During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries Flemish and Dutch work was so closely allied that the two adjectives are often used interchangeably. Previous to this date there was a greater difference in the arts of the two countries. Flanders was more closely in touch with France, and Holland with Germany. The hall of the Gruuthuuse, shown on page 75, is a typical Flemish interior of a semi-public nature. The mantel is of stone and brick, with a simple hood, ornamented in low relief. The severity of this room is in startling contrast



CABINET OF DUTCH MARQUETRY

to the French apartments of the period. The chairs are of the type described in the previous chapter, having high seats, comparatively low backs, and strong turned legs and braces. Of like construction is the Dutch chair in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, illustrated on page 63. The table is similar to the English type of the late sixteenth century, but of a higher order of workmanship. Contemporary with the table is the beautiful oak cupboard, reproduced on the following page. It is interesting to compare this sixteenth-century specimen with the fine fifteenth-century cupboard illustrated in Chapter III. Both are Flemish and both show a striking similarity of construction. The divisions of the doors, panels, and drawers are identical. The locks are placed in the same relative position; the handles of the drawers are of the same variety; the hinges are of the same dimensions. The Renaissance cupboard has brackets and the Gothic cupboard has a heavier molding, but barring

FLEMISH CUPBOARD, SIXTEENTH CENTURY

these details the constructive qualities are one and the same. When it comes to ornament there is a hundred years' difference in time, and a world of difference in the treatment. Each is typical of its kind and each is a beautiful specimen of wood-carving.

Flemish cabinet-making had a wide influence on the furniture-makers of other countries, but Flemish chair-making exerted a greater one. The chair with turned legs and braces traveled from one country to another, but no design equaled in traveling capacity the cane chair of Flanders. It found its way to France, Spain, England and later to America, each country adding a few characteristics. In England it took root so firmly that for years it was classed as Jacobean, and still masquerades as such in many old catalogues and inventories. The attributes of the pure Flemish design were a back and seat of finely woven cane, feet terminating in an outward scroll, three turned stretchers, and a carved under brace following in general lines the carving of the back. The beautiful chair in Blois, described in the preceding chapter, is a French adaptation of the style.

Holland's chief contribution to furniture-making of the seventeenth century was her exquisite marquetry. Holland's commercial intercourse with the orient gave her a knowledge of rare tropical woods, and it is not surprising that she was one of the first nations to use veneering as a form of decoration. Intarsia had been carried to a high degree of perfection in Italy. France later in the century gave to the world André Charles Boulle whose marvelous work in brass and shell stands unrivaled. Spain led in the intricate inlaying of ivory and silver—a legacy from the Moors. But to Holland belongs the honor of bringing to perfection the veneer of colored woods known as "marquetry."

Hamilton Jackson in his book, *Intarsia and Marquetry*, says "The word 'intarsia' is derived from the Latin 'interserere,' to insert, according to the best Italian authorities, though Scherer says there was a similar word, 'tausia,' which was applied to the inlaying of gold and silver in some other metal, an art practiced in Damascus, and there called damascening; and that at first the two words meant the same thing, but after a time one was applied to work in wood and the other to metal-work. The word 'tausia' is said to be of Arabic origin, and there is no doubt that the art is oriental. It perhaps reached Europe either by way of Sicily or through the Spanish Moors. "Marquetry," on the other hand, is a word of much later origin, and comes from the French "marqueter," to spot, to mark. It seems, therefore, accurate to apply the former term to those inlays of wood in which a space is first sunk in the solid."

After the accession of William of Orange Dutch marquetry was imported in great quantities in England, many pieces of which exist to-day in museums and private collections. The wealthy Dutch colonists in America possessed beau-

HALL IN THE GRUUTHUUSE, BRUGES, SIXTEENTH CENTURY

tiful specimens of this work in the form of cupboards and kasses. These are still preserved by the descendants of the original owners and form, in their entirety, an almost complete history of the art as applied to the decoration of furniture from the middle of the seventeenth century until late in the eighteenth century.

In Germany there was a long transitional period during which the lingering traditions of Gothic art died slowly. The early phases of the Renaissance show the grafting of the new upon the old. This mixture of Gothic and Renaissance was less successful in that country than in France where a happier union prevailed.

The best examples of German wood-carving of the early sixteenth century were of ecclesiastical origin. Choir stalls and altar-pieces were richly decorated in the manner of the day. In domestic architecture the combination of Gothic construction and Renaissance ornament was less successful. A certain quaintness, however, marked all German handicraft of this period and early Renaissance specimens are eagerly sought to-day. Following the transitional period came the Flemish-German period in which a marked similarity existed between the work

ROOM IN AN OLD DUTCH HOME, EDAM, HOLLAND, FURNITURE OF THE SEVENTEENTH AND EIGHTEENTH CENTURIES

GERMAN PRESS, TYPICAL EXAMPLE OF RENAISSANCE CARVING

of Flanders and Germany. Spanish influence was fleeting and was mainly confined to a curious ornamentation of silver and ivory based on Saracenic patterns.

Toward the middle of the sixteenth century German handicraft became more individual and the late Renaissance development was a distinct phase. Not until the late seventeenth century, when German designers became engulfed in the extreme rococo, did the work of this nation lose its beauty and vitality. Augsburg, Dresden, Munich, Cologne, and Nuremburg contain many sixteenth-century specimens. Chairs, cupboards, and presses of this period are beautiful specimens of wood-carving. The great presses of this century are the most characteristic pieces of furniture. Made of oak and walnut with carved panels and heavy doors they are as substantial to-day as when they came from the hands of their maker. The press, illustrated on the preceding page, is made of walnut with an unusually fine scheme of decoration. The plain surfaces are well distributed and the ornament, although elaborate, is neither heavy nor fantastic. The lock is concealed in the carving, while the key repeats the lines of the ornament. The ball-feet are worthy of note as they indicate a new feature of furniture-making.

CHAPTER VII

FURNITURE OF THE SPANISH RENAISSANCE

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE STYLE: A BLENDING OF RENAISSANCE AND MOORISH ORNAMENT LARGELY TINCTURED WITH FLEMISH INFLUENCE. FURNITURE-MAKERS COMBINED RARE WOODS WITH SILVER AND IVORY, DEPENDING UPON INLAY INSTEAD OF CARVING FOR DECORATIVE EFFECT.

CHAPTER VII

FURNITURE OF THE SPANISH RENAISSANCE

AS Gothic ornament was largely dominated by Saracenic influence, so it was with the ornament of the Renaissance. Through all the work of Spanish craftsmen runs a vein of Moorish feeling. It is shown in all the arts, especially in that of the wood-carver. Many pieces of furniture of this period are distinctly Moorish; others combine a strong Italian or Flemish influence.

Furniture was imported in quantities and the fact that an old piece is found in Spain does not always indicate that it is of Spanish origin. Charles V, anxious to equal his royal brother-in-law in the splendor of his court, invited workmen from the important cities of Europe to establish their crafts in Seville, Toledo, Valladolid, and Vargua. Among the foreign workmen who took up their residence on Spanish soil were wood-carvers, tapestry-weavers, marqueters, inlayers, and goldsmiths. Moorish inlaying was already a perfected craft and visiting artisans in this branch learned more than they gave. The metal-work of the peninsula had been for centuries of a high order, especially in the way of damascening and niello work.

Rare and beautiful woods entered into the composition of Spanish furniture during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. From her possessions in the east Spain imported ebony and ivory which were utilized in the making of coffers and cabinets. Many of the latter were plain on the exterior, except for beautifully wrought locks and hinges. The ornament was confined to the interior and was of exquisite workmanship. The connection between the chest and the cabinet seems to have been a close one in Spain. The massive cupboards and presses of the north found little favor among native designers. The typical Spanish cabinet was an elevated chest supported by carved or turned columns. Instead of doors there was a drop lid which could be lowered by a turn of a key. Inside were many drawers and compartments ornamented in gold and vermilion, or showing the characteristic combination of ivory and silver. Miniature arches, colonnades, and doors were revealed by the turning key. "All somewhat bizarre," says an English critic, "and altogether rather barbarous, but a rich and effective treatment." Silver was used to such an extent in the making of furniture that it was forbidden by a royal edict in the latter part of the sixteenth century. "No cabinets, desks, coffers, braziers, tables, or other articles decorated with stamped, raised, carved, or plain silver should be manufactured."

SPANISH CHAIR, MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS, BOSTON

The influence of the Flemish cane chair on furniture-making of other nations has been mentioned. The leather chair of Spain almost equaled it in importance. The Spanish design consisted of a sturdy frame of oak or chestnut, a back completely incased in leather, turned stretchers, a carved under-brace, and feet which have been termed "hoof" by collectors. The leather was of decorated Cordovan held in place by large nails. An interesting fate pursued this chair, together with the celebrated Flemish model. English furniture-makers combined the back of one with the feet of the other, sometimes using cane, sometimes leather. The composite chair which reached America late in the seventeenth century, usually had Spanish feet grafted upon a Flemish framework. The intermingling of the two designs worked for good in many cases, for in the hands of skilful craftsmen the best points of the two were retained. The Spanish foot was undoubtedly more graceful than the Flemish, while the general outline of the Flemish chair was better than the Spanish. The Italians combined the various characteristics with marked success. The English were less successful in their treatment.

In the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston is a beautiful high-backed leather chair. It has the scrolled under-brace, the fine hoof feet, and other distinctive marks of the pure Spanish type. It is one of the best examples of its kind in America.

A characteristic Spanish-Flemish design may be found in the chapter entitled *Colonial Furniture,* page 172. This chair shows the mingling of the two styles, and is of English origin.

CHAPTER VIII

ENGLISH FURNITURE OF THE SIXTEENTH AND SEVENTEENTH CENTURIES

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE STYLE: FIRST THE ENGLISH RENAISSANCE OR TUDOR WHICH WAS A MINGLING OF FLEMISH AND ITALIAN GRAFTED UPON GOTHIC. SECOND, LATE TUDOR OR ELIZABETHAN, SHOWING GREATER UNITY; STRAP-WORK AND PANELING WERE FEATURES OF THIS PERIOD. THIRD, JACOBEAN COVERING NEARLY A CENTURY, AND INCLUDING MANY TYPES. FURNITURE WAS PANELED AND CARVED UNTIL WALNUT WAS INTRODUCED WHEN VENEER AND MARQUETRY BECAME POPULAR. AMONG JACOBEAN CHARACTERISTICS WERE THE SPIRAL LEG, THE RISING PANEL, "DOG TOOTH" AND SCROLL BORDERS, AND SPINDLE ORNAMENTS. WITH THE ACCESSION OF WILLIAM OF ORANGE, IN 1688, DUTCH INFLUENCE BECAME PARAMOUNT, AND ENGLISH FURNITURE WAS SLOWLY REVOLUTIONIZED—THE PERFECTED STYLE BEING KNOWN AS QUEEN ANNE.

CHAPTER VIII

ENGLISH FURNITURE OF THE SIXTEENTH AND SEVENTEENTH CENTURIES

WHEN Henry VIII returned from his meeting with François I and Charles V on the Field of the Cloth of Gold, he sought to introduce into England some of the magnificence that characterized the French court. Important changes in Windsor and Hampton date from this event. The great tide of the Renaissance, however, had reached England before this momentous gathering of sovereigns.

Torrigiano, a contemporary of Leonardo da Vinci, was commissioned to erect the tomb of Henry VII. His treatment was naturally in the style of the Renaissance which was approaching its first flower in Italy. Holbein's sojourn in England was an important link in the chain which was strengthened by distinguished visitors from France, Italy, and Flanders.

The sixteenth century was a period of great architectural activity in England. Hardwick Hall and Longleat are splendid specimens of the early Renaissance. The castle of None Such erected by Henry VIII, were it now in existence, would form a valuable addition to Renaissance architecture, for it embodied the work of many celebrities. John of Padua was court architect and to him was intrusted the larger share of the work. It was the king's wish to have the palace equal Fontainebleau, and he spared no expense in carrying out this desire.

The style known as "English Renaissance" or "Tudor" was a mingling of Italian, French, and Flemish, the latter largely predominating. It was not until the accession of Elizabeth that the style became distinctive. During her long reign greater encouragement was given to native workmen, and the style known as "Elizabethan" was much more English than that of the early Tudors.

Two marked phases in interior work existed under the Tudor sovereigns. The first was developed in Henry VIII's time; the second reached its culmination under Elizabeth. The first was the "linen-fold" motive in wood paneling and furniture; the second was "strap-work," mentioned in connection with the Henri II period which was contemporaneous with the Elizabethan. From France via Flanders the linen pattern is supposed to have emanated, although its origin is somewhat obscure. It was introduced into England during the reign of Henry VII and appears to have won instant approval. Like strap-work it appealed strongly to English taste. The treatment of the pattern suggested folds of linen arranged in long, perpendicular lines.

A room in Hampton Court is paneled in this manner and dates from the reign of Henry VIII. Haddon Hall, Parkham, and Oxbridge Castle contain rooms with similar woodwork. This scheme of decoration, which lasted for nearly a century in England, had no connection with the Renaissance. It has been called the latest survival of the Gothic and the last of mediæval ornament. It was known in the monasteries of France long before it reached England, and it is possible that it may have been in use as early as 1450 in Flanders and Germany. In England its development was wholly secular and, with few exceptions, was confined to wall treatment. The folds were executed in low relief and, during the best period, were without ornament. A beautiful cupboard, carved in this manner, owned by Guy F. Laking, Esq., is shown in this chapter. This specimen belongs to the early sixteenth century and is of French origin.

When Elizabeth came to the throne the linen pattern had lost its simplicity. It gradually declined in favor and another style took its place. The beauty of Elizabethan strap-work has been mentioned. The development of this scheme of decoration, like its predecessor, was of slow growth, and was not perfected until late in Elizabeth's reign. It survived this sovereign many years, finding favor under the Stuarts. Haddon and Hardwick Halls contain many examples of strap-work. Over the fireplace in the Presence chamber of Hardwick is a simple interpretation of the *motif*, combined with the round and oval lozenge. In the state dining-room is a stone chimney-piece with a more elaborate treatment. A plain entablature, with an inscription, is surrounded by intricate strap-work in which figures are introduced. The date of the completion of the hall, 1597, is cut in the stone. Hardwick as a whole is a magnificent example of Elizabethan decoration.

The great Presence chamber shows another scheme of wall treatment which was in high favor towards the close of the sixteenth century. This was the plastered frieze used in connection with wood paneling or tapestry. The great tapestry-weaving districts of Flanders and the Loire were sending forth their beautiful productions to enrich the manor houses across the channel. The finest Flemish tapestries are of this century, and Hardwick has many beautiful specimens, the most elaborate hanging in the Audience or Presence room, which is illustrated in this chapter. Here the queen was received when she honored Bess of Hardwick, the Countess of Shrewsbury, with her visits. As a picturesque figure of her day Bess of Hardwick almost rivals Queen Bess. Her wit, her beauty, her money, and her many marriages have been the theme of numerous stories. As a romantic heroine for an historical novel the Countess of Shrewsbury leaves little to be desired, and no background could be more kaleidoscopic than beautiful old Hardwick. The Presence chamber, where so many important events have been en-

LINEN-FOLD CUPBOARD, SIXTEENTH CENTURY

acted, is in a beautiful state of preservation. Above the tapestry is the quaint frieze, once highly colored, but now faded to dim blues, greens, and yellows. Diana and her nymphs are represented in the plaster, together with strange birds and animals. The background is filled with stiff trees and the whole effect is quaintly decorative.

The furniture of the room, with the exception of the stools with curved legs, belongs to the late sixteenth century. The table is the type that followed the board-and-trestle. The stretchers, or "struts," as they were then called in England, are a few inches from the ground. This long and narrow style remained the accepted form until late in the Stuart period. The round table with many turned supports, known in America as the "thousand-legged table," and in England as the "gate-leg table," was the successor of the heavy Elizabethan pattern. In the early Jacobean period (from the accession of James I until the beginning of the Commonwealth) many variations of the long table were in use. The legs were often skilfully turned, showing balls and rectangles, the struts were grooved, and carved with the "dog-tooth" pattern; occasionally brackets were placed beneath the top, ornamented in similar manner.

Chairs, as the seventeenth century progressed, became more varied and were constructed with a greater regard for comfort. During the Tudor period there were few chairs in general use. Benches and stools were the common seats of the day. The Flemish chair, with high seat and low back, was placed in halls and audience rooms. It was seldom seen in the homes. The turned chair, with crude supports and heavy spindles, was a more common style and is interesting to Americans, inasmuch as it was the earliest type imported in the colonies. Governor Carver and Elder Brewster brought turned chairs with them in the Mayflower which are now exhibited in Pilgrim Hall, Plymouth.

The most important chair of Elizabeth's day and of the succeeding reign was the wainscot chair which, as its name indicates, was of oak. This was a massive piece of workmanship, far above the turned chair in point of execution, and often carved with strap-work, scrolls and bits of Renaissance ornament. A plain example of the wainscot chair is seen in Liberty Hall, Philadelphia, and a more elaborate specimen in the Essex Institute, Salem. The latter is a fine piece of Elizabethan furniture and would be rated as such in England.

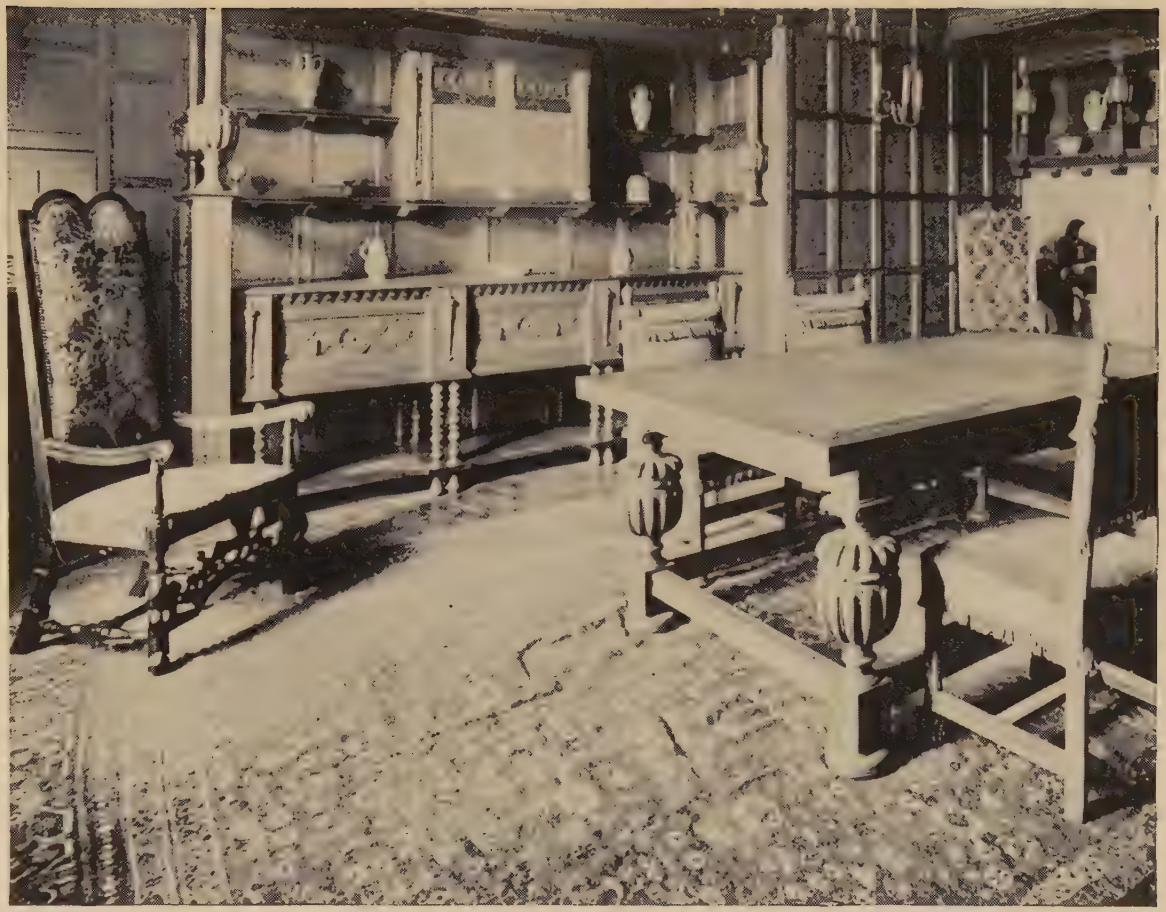
The wainscot table was a little later in date than the wainscot chair. It was a combination chair and table, the back of the seat forming the top of the table. It did not supersede the long table previously mentioned, but was used in connection with it until the more convenient "gate-leg table" became the accepted pattern. Esther Singleton, in writing of oak furniture of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, says of the word wainscot: "The name, according to Skeat,

PRESENCE CHAMBER, HARDWICK HALL, ELIZABETHAN PERIOD

being derived from the low Danish "wagenschot", the best kind of oak wood, well grained and without knots. . . . . That wainscot was applied to the wood rather than the paneling we learn from Harrison's *Historical Description of the Land of Britaine* (1587), where he says, 'that the oak grown in Bardfield Park, Essex, is the finest for joiner's craft, for ofttimes have I scene of their works made of that oak so fine and fair as most of the wainscot that is brought hither out of Danske.' "

The word "joined" is a frequent one in old annals. In 1574 an inventory of the furniture in Thomas Cumberworth's house included: "A presse of waynscott wt diverse shelffes, 3 thrown cheyers, 3 joyned forms, 2 joyned tables, 1 pair of bedstocks, 1 grete waynscott cheyer, 1 waynscott bed, 1 court-cupboarde, 6 joyned stools." Joined furniture was made without nails, being fastened with mortise and tenon, a method almost as old as furniture-making itself. Presses and cupboards continued to be of colossal dimensions, and by their construction offered scope for intricate strap-work, paneling and figure work. "Court" and "livery" cupboards are frequently mentioned in sixteenth century inventories. Many are the interpretations by modern writers of the words "court" and "livery." The former is sometimes translated "short," the latter "service." Whatever their original meaning may have been it is certain that during the late seventeenth century, both in England and America, the words "court" and "livery" were used interchangeably, and always in connection with a high cupboard inclosed with doors. Many early allusions to this piece of furniture include silverware. In *Romeo and Juliet,* a servant in Capulet's house says: "Away with joint stools, remove the court cupboard, look to the plate." In Chapman's *May Day,* published in 1611, occur the lines, "And so for the feast, you have your court cupboards, planted with flagons, cups, beakers, bowls, goblets, basins, and ewers"; and again: "Here shall stand my court cupboard, with its furniture of plate." Another reference reads, "With a lean visage like a carved face on a court cupboard."

The piece of furniture thus designated in Thomas Cumberworth's inventory was doubtless unlike the press, and from the fact that the word "wainscot" is not used, was probably not of oak. The "thrown" chairs mentioned were of the turned variety. This inventory is interesting as it shows the furniture in a home of an Englishman of the middle class. "Bedstocks" were built into the wall and were the common beds of the period, setting aside the pallets of straw which were still used by the lower classes. The "great bed" mentioned was probably of carved oak and the most important piece of furniture in the house. The bedsteads of Elizabeth's day were huge affairs, many of them of great value. Some of the finer ones are preserved in the old manor houses and show a strange mingling of Renaissance and Gothic. In the homes of the nobility there was always a state bed,



DINING-ROOM, SHOWING CUPBOARDS WITH SPIRAL SUPPORTS, JACOBEAN PERIOD

SEVENTEENTH CENTURY CUPBOARD

kept in readiness for a possible visit from the sovereign. The beds slept in by Elizabeth are past counting, and Scottish beds associated with Mary Stuart are almost as numerous.

The Stuart period, beginning with James I and ending with the reign of Queen Anne, covered more than a century. The early Jacobean style was an outgrowth of the Elizabethan. During the reign of James I there was little change in furniture making. With the accession of Charles I the Jacobean style became more firmly established. Homes were more comfortably furnished than at any previous time and the mode of living was more refined. Queen Henriette Marie was partly responsible for the greater refinement of the court. England was far behind France in the small comforts of life and the Queen's influence in this direction was beneficial; so also was that of Van Dyck. The great Flemish painter came to England at this period in order to paint the royal family. Those matchless portraits of the Stuart children did not comprise all of Van Dyck's work on English soil. His visit was scarcely less momentous than that of Holbein a century before.

Inigo Jones, sometimes called "The English Palladio," was at the height of his fame when Charles came to the throne. Christopher Wren was born seven years later, his long life spanning nearly a century, 1632–1723. The influence of these two men was very great, not only upon the architecture of the day, but upon the decorative arts, and especially upon furniture-making. The work of Jones was more closely identified with the early Stuarts and that of Wren with the later Jacobean period.

CHEST OF DRAWERS, MEMORIAL HALL, DEERFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS, LATE JACOBEAN.

One of the distinctive features of Jacobean furniture was the spiral leg which is seen in chairs, cupboards, and chests of drawers. The finest type of spiral was not of the turned variety, but carved by hand. The most interesting pieces of this period were elevated cupboards standing on high spiral supports.

During the Commonwealth progress was retarded. The conditions of the country were not such as to foster the work of the decorator and furniture-maker. With the Restoration came prosperity and a renewed interest in the arts of peace. Charles II had spent a large part of his life in France and was thoroughly imbued with luxurious ideas which he had profitably studied at the court of Louis XIV. Furniture of this reign is somewhat grotesque, combining a medley of designs,

TAPESTRY WOVEN BY MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS

French, English, and Flemish. One marked change for good was the tendency toward lighter, more graceful forms. The introduction of walnut made a startling difference in furniture-designing. The wood did not lend itself to carving and new effects were obtained by veneer and inlay. Cupboards and chests of the late seventeenth century show a variety of decoration. One unique scheme of ornament had a great vogue in England and was widely copied in this country. A plain surface was ornamented with turned pieces of a different wood, cut in the shape of ovals, drops, spindles, and nail heads. Sometimes the pieces were painted, in order to give variety to the scheme. According to Dr. Irving W. Lyon, the pioneer writer on colonial furniture in America, drop ornaments were first used by Peter Koek, a Fleming, who decorated his furniture with carrot-shaped pieces of painted wood. "Nail heads" the same writer traces to a Norman origin, stating that the true nail head was diamond-shaped. Some of this applied-ornament is highly decorative, and marks a distinct epoch in furniture-making. Paneling during the Stuart period remained in favor and was diversified by diamond-

shaped moldings. The "rising" panel belongs to this period and the depressed or sunken panel to Elizabeth's reign.

A characteristic example of applied-ornament is shown in the chest of drawers in Memorial Hall, Deerfield, Massachusetts. According to tradition this piece of furniture was brought from Scotland in the late seventeenth century.

The adjective "Jacobean" has been variously interpreted by furniture writers; some limiting the word to the reigns of James I and James II, others using it in a broader sense and including the furniture of the entire Stuart line. The term is used in the wider meaning in this chapter

The accession of William of Orange, in 1688, was a turning-point in English furniture-making. The best that Holland possessed passed into England, and from that date a beautiful simplicity was manifest in English handicraft. The Flemish chair of cane had already influenced chair-making, and was a distinctive feature of the late Jacobean period. Prominent among Dutch innovations was the cabriole leg, a furniture accessory which was destined to revolutionize the chair, the table, and the chest of drawers. Marquetry was freely used over large plain surfaces, and with its popularity paneling declined in favor.

Changes in furniture-making are gradual. It was not until the reign of Queen Anne that the Dutch and English designs were assimilated. The perfected style is known by the name of this sovereign and belongs to the early part of the eighteenth century.

CHAPTER IX

LOUIS XIV FURNITURE

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE STYLE: A FORMAL ROCOCO IN WHICH PROPORTION AND BALANCE WERE SALIENT FEATURES. IMPORTANT DETAILS WERE THE SHELL, THE CLASSIC ACANTHUS, THE RAM'S HEAD, THE MASK, AND THE SATYR. IN THE EARLY PERIOD FURNITURE WAS MASSIVE AND THE DESIGNS OF THE LOUIS XIII STYLE WERE PERPETUATED. CARVING WAS LARGELY SUPERSEDED BY MARQUETRY AND BY CHISELED MOUNTS OF ORMOLU AND BRONZE.

CHAPTER IX

LOUIS XIV FURNITURE

THE three styles known respectively as Louis XIV, Louis XV, and Louis XVI, form an important chapter in the history of furniture-making. The Louis XIV was characterized by bold effects, lavish, but not excessive, decoration, and faultless execution. Dignity and a certain massive grandeur marked the work of the best "Quatorze" furniture. The Louis XV was the culmination of the rococo school when balance and proportion were considered less important than beauty of detail. The Louis XVI was a return to simpler designs and a more restrained type of ornament. This reaction was partly due to the influence of Marie Antoinette, partly to the newly awakened interest in classic forms, prompted by the discoveries at Pompeii, and partly to the inevitable swinging of the pendulum—from an extreme taste to a simpler one.

Louis XIV reigned seventy-two years, and during that time fashions in costumes and in furniture changed rapidly. There were, however, certain qualities that stamped the handicraft of the period and which rendered it distinctive. Under Louis XIV all the industries of France prospered. This was in a great measure the result of Colbert's able administration. It was Colbert who suggested to the king the wisdom of purchasing the Gobelin manufactory and of placing Lebrun at the head of it as art director; Colbert who organized the lace industries in the provinces, thus turning into French coffers the vast sums that had been previously expended on Italian and Flemish laces; Colbert who founded the Academy of Painters and Sculptors—an association which numbered in its ranks masters of all arts. Thus painters, sculptors, architects, designers, decorators, engravers, and wood-carvers were banded together, working under a common impulse. The academy first occupied an apartment in the Louvre, but later centralized its efforts at the Gobelin factory where, under the direction of Lebrun, royal orders were executed. Here the Louis XIV style was perfected. Previous to this date, 1667, the standards of the preceding reign had influenced design.

Louis was five years of age when his father, Louis XIII, died. During his minority the queen regent and Cardinal Mazarin practically ruled. Anne was a woman of luxurious tastes, and did much to foster the increasing desire at court for costly surroundings. In this she was ably assisted by Mazarin whose love for richly decorated rooms and sumptuous furniture drew heavily on the national exchequer. The regency was brief, for Louis, according to the laws of France,

reached his majority at the age of thirteen, but during that period he had learned a lesson in extravagance that was destined to bear fruit at Versailles

It was not until the death of Mazarin that the young king displayed the qualities of leadership which made him the central figure in Europe. No previous monarch of France had so dominated other nations. His marriage with Marie Theresa, daughter of Philip IV, gave him a hold on Spain and Austria; his invasion of Franche-Comté, a footing in Flanders; his conquest of several Dutch provinces, a grasp on Holland; his purchase of Dunkirk from Charles II, a loophole in England. All these interests had an influence on the arts of the day. Spanish, Dutch, Italian, and Scotch craftsmen were invited to compete with French artisans. It was the desire of Colbert to limit foreign importations, and to this end he established many native industries. Under his administration visiting designers were encouraged to stay until the secrets of their work had been acquired. They were then politely dispatched to their own country laden with honors, and sometimes pensioned.

CHAIR IN VERSAILLES, REGENCY OF ANNE OF AUSTRIA

When the palace of Versailles was decorated and furnished, few foreigners had a part in the work. It was a triumph of French taste and skill, and as such it remains to-day.

Louis XIII had erected a hunting-lodge at Versailles and later remodeled it into a château. On this site, and keeping intact the older building, the present palace was built. The architect was Jules Hardouin Mansart and the landscape-

gardener André Le Nôtre. The greatest artists of the day were employed in decorating the interior and the greatest designers in planning the furnishings. The finest products of the silk and tapestry looms of France were utilized for the hangings. The rarest woods of the world were selected for the furniture. Craftsmen of the kingdom vied with each other in perfecting their art so that the palace of Le Grand Monarque should stand unrivaled.

Madame de Sévigné who penned so many graphic pictures of court life, wrote, in 1676, to her daughter: "Let me inform you, my child, of a change of scene which will appear to you as agreeable as it does to every one. I went to Versailles on Saturday. This is how things are disposed. You are acquainted with the toilette of the queen, the mass, the dinner; but it is no longer necessary to be bored while their majesties are at table, for at three o'clock, the king, the queen, all the princes and the princesses there are, Madame de Montespan and all her suite, all the courtiers, all the ladies, in a word, what is called the court of France, find themselves in that fine apartment of the king that you know. All is furnished divinely; all is magnificent."

LOUIS XIV CLOCK

We may regret that Madame's daughter was familiar with the "apartment of the king," for otherwise a spirited description would have followed. The writer describes the music and games with which the court is entertained:

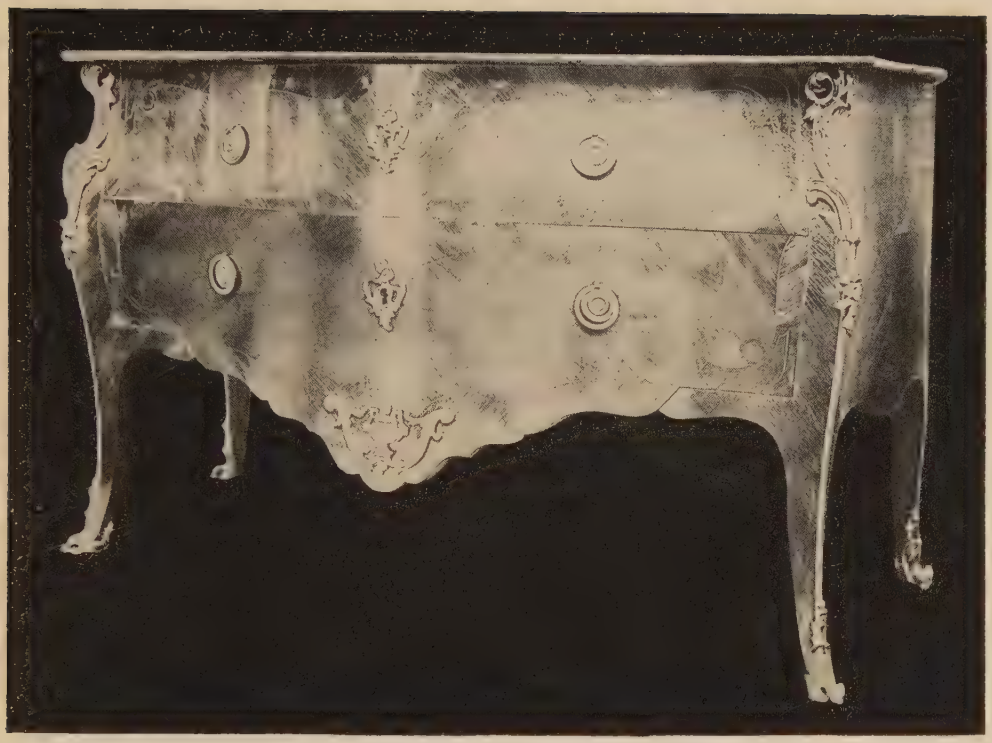
"That agreeable confusion without confusion of all that is most select lasts from three to six. At that hour their majesties enter their carriages. Some go in gondolas on the canal, where there is music. At ten o'clock all return, when a comedy is performed; midnight strikes and then all is over."

The apartment to which Madame de Sévigné referred was undoubtedly the Salon de la Guerre, mentioned by Mrs. Kingsley in her fine description of the palace.

"Nowhere," she says, "has interior decoration been carried to a further point

of perfection than in Versailles where we are offered the most splendid examples possible of the Louis XIV style. It may be all wrong in the eyes of architectural purists, but for sheer magnificence of effect, for actual richness of detail in marble and painting, in gilded stucco, carved wood, superb gilt-bronze, it cannot be surpassed. Take, for example, the Salon de Mars. The modillions of the grand golden cornice are empty casques. And in the covings of the ceiling are golden trophies and cupids in gilt stucco riding eagles and taming wolves. Golden wreaths frame the paintings of the ceiling by Audran, depicting Mars in his chariot. Or, again, the Salon d'Apollon, with its ceiling by Lafosse and its winged muses of extreme beauty, on which the great sculptor Coysevox did not refuse to work. But all this glory of decorative art culminates in the Grand Galerie and the Salon de la Guerre. Here decoration with one object ever in view, the glorification of the king, can scarcely be carried further. The coved roof represents in thirty subjects the history of the Grand Monarque, painted under the direction of Lebrun, from his most carefully prepared designs. Boileau and Racine composed the inscriptions for each of these subjects, which are set in carved and gilded sculpture of indescribable richness and variety. The great trophies of gilt-bronze upon magnificent colored marbles and the twenty-four groups in gilded stucco are due to Coysevox. The capitals of the pilasters, the frames of the Venetian mirrors, all the details of ornament, are by the first artists of the day. In the Salon de la Guerre, in Coysevox's immortal bas-relief, the king, young, radiant, triumphant, tramples nations in chains under his horse's feet. When we add to the

BOULLE CONSOLE, EARLY LOUIS XIV



BUREAU, LATE LOUIS XIV

decorations that have survived war and revolution all that have been lost, the statues, carved cabinets above all, the famous silver *mobilier* made at the Gobelin's to adorn the gallery, we get an idea of splendoralmost unequaled. Most of the treasures are dispersed or destroyed. The silver furniture was sent to the mint in 1690 to defray the expenses of the war against the League of Augsburg."

In contrast with these regal apartments which show the grandiose side of the Louis XIV style is the room decorated and furnished for Madame de Maintenon, in Fontainebleau. Here the simple phase is illustrated. Barring certain details in the decorations, such as the "L" and the crown, this room is doubtless a prototype of the salon in many private houses. The plain panels, the simple mantel, and the substantial chairs are far more valuable from the decorative standpoint than the gilded grandeur of the Salon de la Guerre.

In France the distinction between the *salon de compagnie* and the *salon de famille* has always been emphasized. It is unfortunate that modern decorators in

treating a room in Louis XIV or Louis XV style neglect the simple aspect of the style, which, with the exception of state apartments and ball-rooms, is the only side suitable for reproduction in an American home. The gorgeous rooms in Versailles are chosen as models, rather than the plainer apartments in Fontainebleau or the Trianons.

Many pieces of furniture belonging to palace and to private house were destroyed at the time of the Revolution, but enough remain to show the trend of the Louis XIV period. The Renaissance raised furniture-making to the dignity of an art, but it was not until the reign of Louis XIV that furniture-makers individually ranked as artists. Some of the cabinet-makers of that day were as renowned as the painters, and one at least made a name for himself that has outlived the fame of many of his brothers of the brush. This man was André Charles Boulle. In 1672 he became *ébéniste* to the king and was granted quarters in the Louvre. The royal patent conferred upon him the title of "Engraver in Ordinary of the Royal Seals," and also designated him as "architect, painter, carver in mosaic, artist in cabinet-work, chaser, inlayer, and designer."

Boulle was a man of many talents, but his fame rests chiefly on a unique marquetry of tortoise shell and brass with which he ornamented his furniture. He was not the inventor of the process, but he carried it to such a point of excellence that the name of the originator has been overlooked. Doubtless some chest or casket of oriental workmanship suggested to French cabinet-makers this form of decoration. Royal inventories of the late fourteenth century mention Damascus caskets of shell overlaid with silver. Joan, first wife of Louis XII, numbered among her dower chests one of ivory and horn inlaid with copper. Boulle's handiwork was quite unlike oriental marquetry in point of execution, but it bore a slight resemblance to it in general effect. His method was to cover the piece of furniture to be decorated with a veneer of shell, over which brass cuttings were fastened. Small brass nails secured the metal to the shell background and these were deftly engraved to form part of the design. Shells, scrolls, acanthus foliage, and other characteristic bits of ornament were represented in the brass. Metal mounts and moldings were a feature of the work. Masks, satyrs, and cupids were some of the designs used as garnitures. The ram's head was a favorite with Boulle, and may be found on many of his pieces. These mounts were usually of ormolu, a composition of gold, mercury and copper which was applied to the brass to give it the appearance of gold. Sometimes the process of veneer was reversed and upon a brass foundation shell was appliqued. When the shell was overlaid with brass, it was called "first part," or "boulle," and when the brass formed the background, with shell ornamentation, it was termed "second part" or "counter." When both were combined in the same piece of furniture it was "boulle and

AN EXAMPLE OF SIMPLE LOUIS XIV FURNITURE, MADAME DE MAINTENON'S ROOM, FONTAINEBLEAU

counter." Other terms were "new boulle" and "old boulle." The former referred to the practice of placing color beneath the shell. Brilliant effects were obtained by lining the shell with scarlet or gold-leaf. This combination was the work of André's imitators, and found little favor with the master himself. Boulle's own handicraft was marked by a refinement which his followers were unable to copy. Many of Boulle's designs were furnished by Lebrun and executed under his supervision.

The console in the Louvre, illustrated on page 102, is an example of his early work. It combines "boulle" and "counter," and is a representative piece. It also shows the massive type of furniture in vogue during the early Louis XIV period. The console depends entirely on the marquetry and metal mounts for interest; the outline is heavy to the verge of cumbersome. The supports are of the pedestal order and are a survival of the preceding reign. The pedestal support is important as indicating the date of the piece.

Later furniture shows a curving leg, still massive, but more graceful. The supports of the early eighteenth century are more slender, and approximate the Louis XV style. The two extremes may be studied in the console mentioned and in the bureau on page 103.

The chair reproduced belongs to the early Louis XIV period. It was made during the regency of Anne of Austria, and has the heavy supports of the Louis XIII period. The acanthus leaf is the chief motive in the decoration, as it is in most of the chairs of that day. The leaf is well modeled and is in low relief, a marked contrast to its later development when endless foliations replaced the severer handling. Beauvais tapestry forms the upholstery and fringe in corresponding colors adds a finish to the seat and back.

Later chairs show a bolder treatment of the acanthus and a more ornate frame. The pedestal supports are still in evidence, but the lines have changed somewhat. The arms have a deeper curve and have lost something in beauty. It is a point worthy of notice that the arms of the Renaissance chairs were quite straight, and that the curve was of gradual growth. Chair legs in France remained straight until late in the seventeenth century when the general tendency towards flowing lines altered the supports of chairs, tables, and cabinets. During the last fifteen years of Louis XIV's reign (1700–1715) every article of furniture, except the bed, conformed to rococo outlines. Rococo ornament had long held sway, but shapes as a whole had been severe.

The bed had undergone several changes. The lower posts were discarded and the canopy was suspended from the cornice. The bed in the king's chamber at Versailles shows to what an extent the decoration of this article of furniture could be carried. The headboard of this royal structure is carved in the best manner

HEADBOARD, LOUIS XIV BEDSTEAD, VERSAILLES

of the period. The mask with radiations, surrounded by the laurel wreath, the acanthus scrolls, and the shell are all characteristic. The mask represented the sun and the radiations the beams. This was a compliment to his majesty whose power was without limit. The hangings of the bed are of Gobelin tapestry and Lyons velvet.

Ebony, oak, walnut, and chestnut were the woods most in favor with furniture-makers. Rare woods, like sandal and tulip, were used as panels to give color and variety. When to this combination onyx, porphyry, and lapis lazuli were added, the whole ornamented with ormolu frames and mounts, only a prophet in furniture could have predicted that a succeeding style would carry decoration a point further.

The Louis XIV style was suited to the monarch who delighted in being called *le grand* and who desired to be painted in the character of Jove hurling thunderbolts at trembling Europe. It was fitted for palaces but, save in its plainest aspect, was little suited for the homes of those born outside the purple.

That elaborate furniture was not confined to the court may be gathered from letters and inventories of the celebrated cabinet-makers of the day. Boulle made many pieces for the wealthy citizens of Paris, particularly in the later years of his life when the king's fancy had turned to the work of younger men. Boulle lived to be ninety years of age, surviving his royal patron more than a decade. The list of cabinets, consoles and armoires designed by him is a long one. Much of his work, like that of his contemporaries, was destroyed at the time of the Revolution.

CHAPTER X

LOUIS XV FURNITURE

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE STYLE: THE EXTREME ROCOCO IN WHICH THE PRINCIPAL DETAILS WERE THE BROKEN SHELL, THE CURLED ENDIVE, AND THE SPIRAL SCROLL. BALANCE AND SYMMETRY WERE LESS IMPORTANT IN THE EYES OF FURNITURE-MAKERS THAN RICHNESS OF ORNAMENT AND FAULTLESS EXECUTION. ANGLES GAVE PLACE TO CURVES, AND THE TALENTS OF THE GOLDSMITH AND THE PAINTER WERE UTILIZED IN DESIGNING FURNITURE WHICH, IN POINT OF WORKMANSHIP, HAS NEVER BEEN SURPASSED.

CHAPTER X

LOUIS XV FURNITURE

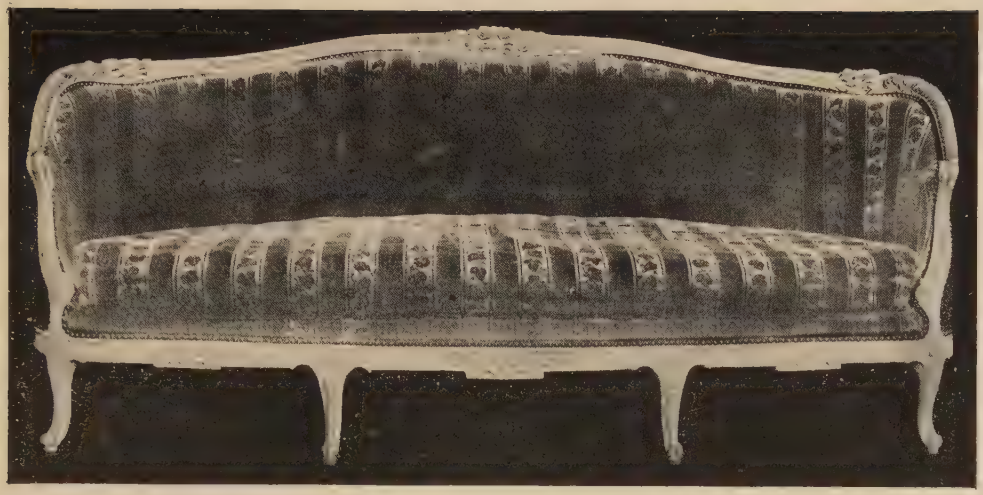
THERE were no clearly defined lines between the Louis XIV and the Louis XV styles of furniture. The sweeping curves and ornate decorations which characterized the designs of the early "Quinze" period were the natural outgrowth of the late "Quatorze" epoch. From the time that Pierre Mignard succeeded Lebrun, as art director, a gradual change had taken place in all handicraft. Instead of one controlling force there were a dozen influences. Designers, free from the restraint of obeying one master mind, worked on independent lines. In rare cases this was productive of good. The arts as a whole suffered seriously. With the death of the Grand Monarque the last of the seventeenth-century traditions passed away.

Louis XV, like his great predecessor, was only five years of age when he was proclaimed king. During his minority the office of regent devolved upon the duke of Orleans. This term of eight years, 1715–1723, was an important period in the history of decorative art. The old court with its stately ceremonies, its pomp and magnificence was gone, and in its place was a new court bent on the lightest and gayest amusements. The formal arrangement of rooms, the classic treatment of walls and furniture, found little favor with the regent and his followers. To conform to the tastes of the day decorators introduced the extreme rococo. The broken shell, the twisted acanthus, the curled endive, and the flowing scroll formed a part of interior woodwork. The cornice, the wainscot, the mantel, the moldings of windows and doors, the frames of panels and pictures, embodied one and the same idea. To harmonize with this setting furniture was, of necessity, constructed on similar lines. Plain surfaces were abhorred. Everything glittered with elaborate mounts of bronze and ormolu; everything was ornamented to such a degree that its real purpose became a secondary consideration. Several pieces of furniture were sometimes combined in one in order to give wood and metal-workers greater scope for ingenuity. Some of the regency designs are strange combinations of writing-desks, bureaus, and timepieces. The workmanship of this fantastic furniture is of a high order; the greatest artists of the day bestowed their skill upon it. While it does not surpass in beauty of execution the work of the masterly band who designed furniture for Louis XIV, it equals it in many ways. A few of the great cabinet-makers, who were associated with Lebrun, lived to execute orders for the regent, and also for Louis XV.

Charles Cressent, a pupil of Boulle, and one of his most noted followers was closely identified with the style of the regency. Dubois and the elder Caffieri were among the number who adapted their methods to the tastes of the time. Boulle was less flexible. With the spirit of the day he was never in touch. His work belongs so entirely to the "Quatorze" period, it is such a complete expression of the formalism of the seventeenth century, that it is impossible to associate him with the succeeding epoch. He produced much that was fine in the latter years of his life, but it bears little resemblance to the handicraft of his contemporaries.

GOBELIN TAPESTRY DESIGNED BY BOUCHER AND TESSIER, 1757. EXECUTED BY NEILSON

Among the painters of the regency who lent their talents to the embellishing of walls and furniture were Lancret and Watteau. Among the hosts of interior decorators who designed furniture were Meissonier, de Cotte, Boffrand, Oppenord, and Pineau. Meissonier was the real leader of the rococo school. To him is credited the introduction of the broken shell, and the countless twists and twirls which were such a feature of French decoration during the eighteenth century. His defiance of the rules of balance and proportion delighted the duke of Orleans, who gave him many commissions. Meissonier disregarded all principles of symmetry and sought to obtain novel effects by introducing startling contrasts. One side of a cabinet or console would often be treated in a manner quite different from the other. He was consistent



LOUIS XV SOFA, PETIT TRIANON

only in that he carried his scheme of contrasts to a very fine point. In furnishing a room every detail conformed to this erratic treatment. Meissonier achieved considerable fame and lived to see his work extolled and condemned. That he had a powerful influence on the arts of the day his many enemies could not deny. Flemish, German, and English cabinet-makers borrowed extensively from him. Chippendale, in his early days, patterned many of his designs after Meissonier. His book of drawings for furniture, *The Gentleman and Cabinet-maker's Director*, bears more than a chance resemblance to the work of the Frenchman. Some of the designs for state beds, bureaus, and commodes surpass the most extravagant conceptions of Meissonier, and emphasize the fact that rococo ornament in the hands of the English passed even beyond the limit placed upon it by the French.

The work of the great furniture-makers of the regency and of the Louis XV period had certain qualities of elegance and grace, which foreign wood-workers were unable to imitate. This is especially noticeable in the German and Italian handicraft of the day. The German rococo and the Italian baroque combine all the faults of the style *rocaille* without any of its redeeming features. There was no suggestion of heaviness in the most ornate piece of French furniture. Fantastic as the design often was there was no hint of absurdity in its construction or decoration. Possessing a discrimination which the German and the Italian did not share, the Frenchman was able to preserve the narrow line that separated the extrava-

gant from the grotesque. Symmetry, which was such an important factor in the eyes of the furniture-makers of the Louis XIV period, was lacking in the work of many of the later craftsmen.

Louis XIV carried his love of balance to such a point that Madame de Maintenon once wrote, "The king will have us all buried in symmetry." Such fine distinctions did not trouble Louis XV, nor the men and women of his court, whose favor or disapproval made or marred the success of an artist.

The group of men—decorators, designers, furniture-makers, workers in metal and marquetry—who spent their lives in the endeavor to please a capricious court formed a large and notable body. Within the compass of a single chapter it is not possible to give more than a brief mention of the great artist-artisans of this period. Many volumes would be needed to treat in an adequate way French handicraft of the eighteenth century. The subject of furniture alone, if presented in all its phases, would demand a chapter on the great tapestry industries of France, another on Sèvres porcelain, a third on metals, and a fourth on lacquer. Wood alone formed but an insignificant part in the making of a large portion of the Louis XV furniture. Marquetry had its place, but the pieces in which marquetry alone is used for ornamentation are very rare. The talents of the tapestry-weaver, of the potter, and of the goldsmith, were utilized to produce those marvelous cabinets and commodes which to-day, when offered for sale, bring prices which can scarcely be expressed in less than four figures.

Among the men who made this sumptuous furniture may be mentioned Riesener, Cressent, Leleu, Oeben, Röntgen, Duplessis, Pasquier, Carlin, Hervieu, Gouthière, and the Caffieri. Jacques and Philippe Caffieri belonged to a famous family of metal-workers. Jacques was a son of Filippo Caffieri, who came to France from Italy about the middle of the seventeenth century. He had served Pope Alexander VII with distinction but, tempted by the reports of the generosity of Louis XIV, joined the band of workers at the Gobelins. For more than a century the name of Caffieri was closely associated with French furniture. The metal mounts and moldings which came from the workshop of Jacques and his son Philippe were not surpassed by those of any other designer. The exquisite finish of their metal-work was notable in an age when beauty of execution was the rule rather than the exception. The commode with *bombé* or curving front was the usual medium chosen by them to display their intricate garnitures of bronze and ormolu.

Pierre Gouthière followed the methods of the Caffieri. He and Riesener were younger men and were identified with both the Louis XV and the Louis XVI styles. Gouthière executed many beautiful pieces of furniture for the duchess du Barry. At the time of her execution she owed seven hundred and fifty-six thousand livres for furniture designed and ornamented by him. The government

refused to pay this sum, and after endless lawsuits the ill-fated Gouthière died in poverty. His work lacked the strength of that of Philippe Caffieri and Charles Cressent, but it was marked by elegance and great delicacy. A dull gold finish, which he is said to have invented, makes it possible to distinguish his unsigned work. In 1858 the marquis of Hertford desired to have a replica of one of Gouthière's most famous pieces, the "Cabinet d'Artois," at Windsor. To produce this copy, years were given to the task, and the cost, including the delicately chased mounts, was three thousand pounds.

LOUIS XV CHAIR, GARDE-MEUBLE

Jean Riesener was born in Glaudbeck, near Cologne and bore somewhat the same relation to Louis XV that Boulle did to Louis XIV and Vouet to Louis XIII. Among the cabinet-makers who served the capricious king, no one pleased his fancy more than this transplanted German. He was a pupil of Jean François Oeben, and after the death of his master, succeeded to the title of *ébéniste du Roi*. Less is known of Oeben than of many others who filled positions of minor importance.

The celebrated *bureau du Roi* was begun by Oeben and finished by Riesener. Few pieces of furniture have been the theme of so many discussions. Signed "Riesener 1769 à l'Arsénal de Paris" it is only in late years that Oeben has been given a share in its glory. No article of handicraft belonging to the "Quinze" period has been the cause of so much conjecture. Column after column has been printed to prove this theory and that. Sometimes all the honors are given to Riesener; again he is stripped of his laurels and they are handed to Oeben; again they are divided among Riesener, Duplessis, and Hervieu. It is now believed that the conception of the design was due to Oeben, that Reisener completed the task, that Duplessis modeled the mounts, and that the casting was done by Hervieu.

The "bureau" is in reality a secretary of unusual pattern. Viewed as an object of art it is a marvelous piece of work. The mounts are of bronze of a most elaborate character. Reclining figures of great beauty, medallions, vases, wreaths, and

garlands are the metal ornaments of this remarkable piece of furniture. Lavish as the description sounds there is a suggestion in the treatment of the whole design of the simplicity of the Louis XVI period. Could the vases and the figures be removed the bureau would show little trace of the style *rocaille*. Had the date been 1750 instead of 1769 it would doubtless have been treated in the true rococo spirit. The *bureau du Roi* is typical of the work of the time in the skill shown in the decoration of the back.

No hidden corners were shirked by French craftsmen. The care bestowed upon the framework of furniture may be noted in the illustrations of the chairs from the Garde-Meuble. They have lost something in beauty by being robbed of their upholstery. As furniture studies they have gained in value. They show just what French furniture-makers borrowed from the Flemish and what they in turn gave to the English. They have the curving legs which superseded the pedestal support of the Louis XIV period, and the rococo carving which supplanted the classic acanthus leaf. It is a mild rococo, however, and in the case of the straight-back chair, worthy of faithful reproduction. Similar in treatment is the sofa from the Petit Trianon which was designed for du Barry. It is of French walnut and the upholstery is deep old rose. These pieces represent the simple side of the style.

"Rococo" is an elastic term and one that has been applied to every stage of rock and shell decoration from the time of Louis XIII to the declining days of Louis XV. With many people the word is wholly associated with modern conceptions. The Louis XV furniture of the shops is fearful to contemplate, and when brought into juxtaposition with the furnishings of the usual house, becomes what Marjorie Fleming termed the multiplication table, "Something that human nature cannot endure." Even genuine pieces of old French furniture cannot be placed with impunity side by side with the household gods of to-day.

Styles of decoration and furniture are the outgrowth of conditions. The Louis XV style of furniture was the direct result of definite causes. When studied against the background of the eighteenth century it becomes one of the most fascinating in history. It may not appeal to one in the same way that the styles of the early Renaissance and Georgian periods do; it may not fit into every-day life as does the colonial; it will not bear reproducing except under the most exacting conditions; but that it has a distinct charm of its own cannot be gainsaid. It must be studied with the life and art of the period constantly in mind—the pleasure-loving Louis spending a fortune on the whims of de Pompadour and her extravagant successor, du Barry; the great artists of the day, like Lancret and Boucher, turning from vast canvases to decorate a fan or a snuff-box; the great metal-workers, Caffieri and Gouthière, bestowing the same care upon a sconce or candlestick

LOUIS XV ARM-CHAIR, GARDE-MEUBLE

that they gave to some momentous commission; the foremost tapestry-weavers devoting months to the upholstery of a footstool. Trifles were matters of such consequence that they assumed the importance of serious undertakings.

That furniture should receive the careful attention of great painters like Watteau, Lancret, and Boucher was the natural result of an age that placed so high a value on the perfection of detail. If the walls of a room were worthy of their regard the furnishings were no less so. Many of the most treasured pieces of the regency and of the Louis XV period bear decorations by Watteau and Boucher. Screens and cabinets were painted in the manner which they had made famous. Boucher's cupids and Watteau's shepherdesses have more than a passing interest. They seem the very essence of the art of the day. Watteau's untimely death occurred early in the reign of Louis XV, but a host of pupils perpetuated his methods.

Painted furniture formed a distinct class. Equally unique were the pieces which were enriched with plaques and panels of porcelain. Madame de Pompadour was largely responsible for the introduction of this fragile furniture. She was at the height of her power when the beautiful soft paste porcelain of the Sèvres manufactory was perfected. In striving for novel decorations in the furnishing of her apartment her fancy turned to rare china. Marquetry, foreign lacquers, carvings, and paintings were for the moment discarded. Sèvres porcelain was chosen to form the embellishment of cabinets, writing-desks, and the many other articles which found place in the elegant boudoir of the king's favorite.

One class of furniture not yet mentioned was designated as Vernis-Martin. For more than a century cabinet-makers had sought to obtain a lustre which would give to their work the appearance of Chinese lacquer. During the reign of François I a few pieces of Chinese furniture were imported from Portugal. In the seventeenth century, as trade between Holland and China increased, many articles of Chinese origin found their way to France where they were highly prized. So

great was the demand for oriental lac that panels of Chinese woodwork were inserted in French furniture. This was a combination, however, that could not long be tolerated. A Dutch cabinet-maker named Huygens is credited with being the first to discover a preparation which had the qualities of lacquer. The Martin family of Paris, after years of experimenting, perfected a composition which was called Vernis-Martin, or Martin's varnish. This invention placed them in an independent position. They were carriage-painters but with the success of their lacquer they became cabinet-makers. In the painting of carriages they had a field for considerable skill, for vehicles of all kinds were elaborately ornamented in the time of Louis XV. Coaches and sedan chairs received as careful a scheme of decoration as the interior of houses. Frequently the scheme was the same. The craze for repeating the inevitable scrolls and shells extended to every possible object, without reference to its size, purpose, or construction. This was where the rococo school differed from all others under the sun. When my lady sat in her boudoir she was surrounded with dancing cupids and rose garlands, with gilded wreaths and painted scrolls. When she was carried through the streets of Paris in her sedan chair she was still be-wreathed and be-scrolled. Cupids danced, and pastoral maids simpered, and if they were not the cupids and pastoral maids of Boucher and Watteau they were such a clever copy that the effect was precisely the same.

LOUIS XV CLOCK

In the decorating of such sumptuous vehicles the Martins had served a long apprenticeship. It is not to be wondered at that, in later years, they achieved renown not only for the beauty and durability of their lacquer, but for the skill with which they painted figures and landscapes. They were followed by many imitators, and "Vernis-Martin" pieces, so called, became very common, but like all imitations they lacked the spirit of the originals.

The small articles of furniture of Louis XV's time — the clocks, chandeliers, candelabra, sconces, and mirrors—were as skilfully constructed as the large pieces. The workmanship of these bronze and gilt objects was carried to a high state of perfection. In some of them there was beauty of line as well as matchless execution. It is interesting to compare a clock of this period, here illustrated, with the Louis XIV timepiece in the preceding chapter. The difference between "Quatorze" and "Quinze", as exemplified in small things, is clearly set forth.

Both clocks belong to the bracket class; both are of the same size and mechanical construction; both are ornamented with marquetry and metal mounts. The Louis XV has more sweeping curves; the mounts, instead of closely outlining the woodwork, form an independent feature of the decoration; the acanthus leaf, as a *motif*, is abandoned and the curled endive takes its place. These articles are typical of the two styles. They are chosen from the middle periods. Late Louis XIV furniture resembled early Louis XV, and late Louis XV approached the Louis XVI. The rococo school, by its very extravagance, brought about a reaction that was destined to transform furniture-making.

CHAPTER XI

LOUIS XVI FURNITURE

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE STYLE: SIMPLICITY OF CONSTRUCTION AND SEVERITY OF ORNAMENT. ROCOCO DETAILS DISAPPEARED AND CLASSIC EMBLEMS REPLACED THEM. IMPORTANT FEATURES WERE THE FLUTED COLUMN, THE BAY LEAF, THE OAK AND ACORN, THE BELL FLOWER OR "CORN HUSK," THE GREEK BAND, AND THE PLAIN ACANTHUS. STRAIGHT LINES SUPERSEDED CURVES AND ORNAMENT WAS A MEANS NOT AN END.

CHAPTER XI

LOUIS XVI FURNITURE

TO Marie Antoinette has long been accorded the honor of the pseudo-classic revival in France. Recent writers on French handicraft of the eighteenth century doubt the young queen's part in the matter, and point out the fact that the return to simpler forms took place several years before the Austrian princess married the dauphin.

The Louis XVI style of decoration was of gradual growth. It is not possible to mark the date when the old standards gave place to the new. It is an extremely interesting development, for in its perfected form it differed as widely from the Louis XV style as did the early Renaissance from the Gothic. Whether the style owed its existence to the influence of Marie Antoinette, or to the discoveries of antique ornament at Pompeii and Herculaneum, or to the natural reaction from an extreme taste to a simpler one, are questions which are not of vital importance to-day. Doubtless many causes were instrumental in giving birth to the Louis XVI school. As the limit of extravagance had been reached any change was necessarily towards plainer models. A return to simplicity in decorative art meant a return to the antique.

In the eighteenth-century Renaissance, Greece, not Rome was the inspiration. Straight lines replaced the flowing scrolls which had so long dominated interior decoration. Horizontal bands superseded the broken and tortured moldings. Irregular panels, painted with cupids and rose garlands, gave way to rectangular spaces ornamented with classic emblems. Furniture-makers discarded curves and adopted severe outlines. The endive and the twisted acanthus disappeared; the laurel and the oak leaf replaced them. To the Greek band was given the prominence previously allotted to the shell. The fluted column was made a constructive part of nearly every piece of furniture. In the chair and the table the supports were fluted, tapering slightly at the base. In the cabinet the column had the character of a pilaster, sometimes tapering, sometimes resting on claw-feet. The oak leaf was seldom used in the decoration of the chair, but in the cabinet, armoire, console, and bureau, it was made a very ornamental feature. The laurel or the bay leaf was also effectively used and on rare occasions the acanthus, in a severe form, was revived. But to the oak leaf was given chief preference and it is interesting to study its development in small as well as large pieces of furniture. In the decoration of clocks, mirrors, and sconces it was an important and beautiful accessory.

The cabinet from Fontainebleau is an excellent example of the Louis XVI style. The fluted columns have no ornamentation except crossed bands of ribbon. The oak leaf appears in both a natural and conventionalized manner. The metal work is simple and exceedingly good. The gold is of two shades, red-gold in the moldings and green-gold in the mounts. The claw-feet which are in the shape of eagle's talons are very spirited. An unusual effect is gained by the insertion of dark panels which add greatly to the beauty of the design. (See page 126.)

The Louis XV furniture-maker would not have been content to leave the broad center panel undecorated. Marquetry and elaborate mounts would have been necessary adjuncts in his eyes. The charm of flat unadorned spaces was unknown to him. Fontainebleau contains many pieces of furniture designed expressly for Marie Antoinette, and this cabinet is of the number.

Pierre Rousseau planned the apartments of the queen at Fontainebleau and designed the decorations. The boudoir is particularly fine and has been little altered since it was first executed. Everything pertaining to Marie Antoinette is of interest. From the historical point of view there are no apartments in Fontainebleau, Compiègne, Versailles, or the Petit Trianon so worthy of study as those occupied by the ill-fated queen. From the standpoint of interior decoration all the rooms furnished in the Louis XVI style have value. Of the three schools named in honor of the sovereigns Louis XIV, Louis XV, and Louis XVI, none is so worthy of reproduction as the style "Louis Seize". It combines grace with simplicity, and, when correctly interpreted, is as suitable in an American home of the twentieth century as it was in a French palace of the eighteenth century.

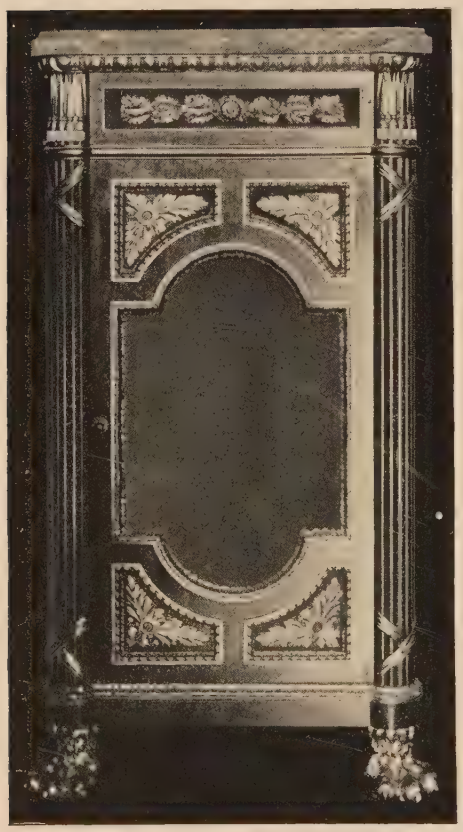
In the case of the three great French styles the palatial pieces form an important contribution to furniture lore, for with the exception of greater richness of material and more elaborate detail, the furniture of the court closely resembled that of the citizen's house. Thus the collections of Versailles, Fontainebleau, and the Garde-Meuble have more than a royal significance. The Louis XIV style suggests grandeur, the Louis XV elegance, and the Louis XVI grace. Comfort is not lacking in many of the Louis XIV designs but comfort is not their most prominent feature. In the Louis XV pieces there is more luxury and less magnificence. The Louis XVI designs are constructed on severe lines but are perfectly proportioned, and combine both beauty and comfort. The furniture of this period seems made for use, not merely a medium for the display of intricate marquetry and elaborate metal work. Ornament for ornament's sake is absent although perfection of detail is never lacking.

Many of the men who achieved fame under Louis XV rendered Louis XVI distinguished service. Riesener, Carlin, Duplessis, Leleu, Gouthière left an impress on both periods. Rousseau, Guibert, Saunier, Röntgen, Benemann, Thomire,

LOUIS XVI BEDSTEAD, FONTAINEBLEAU

and Oeben, the younger,were more closely identified with the Louis XVI style. Much of Riesener's later work was executed for Marie Antoinette and is marked by the same exquisite finish that made his furniture famous during the reign of Louis XV.

In the catalogue of the Hamilton collection which was sold at auction in 1882, are listed many of these royal designs. "No. 301. Upright Secrétaire, signed 'Riesener 1790.' Branded with the cipher of Marie Antoinette on the back, £4,620. No. 302. A commode en suite signed 'Riesener 1790,' £4,305. No. 303. An oblong writing-table, stamped 'J. Riesener,' and branded underneath with the cipher of Marie Antoinette."



LOUIS XVI CABINET, FONTAINEBLEAU

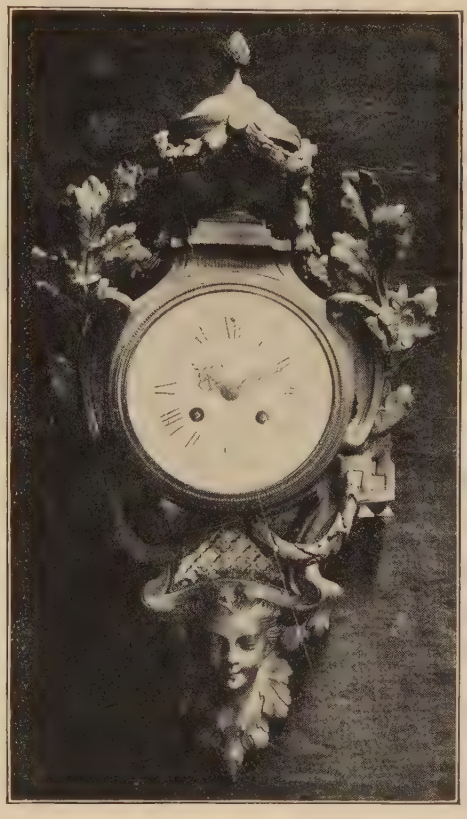
In a footnote in the catalogue it is stated that "the commode and the secrétaire were among the last works of Riesener and that they were executed for the palace of St. Cloud, where the queen resided during the summer of 1790."

David Röntgen, usually called "David" in French furniture annals, was a remarkable designer. He was a member of the Paris guild of cabinet-makers, but executed most of his furniture in his studio at Neuwied. Röntgen owed his reputation not only to the excellence of his work, but to his unique methods of conducting his sales. From his headquarters in Neuwied he made journeys to the various courts of Europe. Among his royal patrons were Marie Antoinette, Frederick of Prussia, and Catherine of Russia.

Combined with beauty of execution were many contrivances which rendered his work remarkable. Secret drawers and hidden locks were made a feature of his desks and cabinets, and earned for him the title of *ébéniste mécanicien*. His mechanical ingenuity was often turned to account when important sales were pending.

Lady Dilke describes one of his transactions with Catherine of Russia. Röntgen had arrived in St. Petersburg with a notable collection of furniture :"The empress

was ready to admire and wonder, but could not be persuaded to buy, her funds just then being exhausted by the war with the Turks. In the night preceding the visit which she had promised to pay to Röntgen's exhibition, arrived the news of a naval victory won by the Russians at Tchesme, and when she was received on the following day at the place appointed, matters were so arranged that her eyes should fall at once on an imposing secrétaire, which was surmounted by a clock bearing a Genius, whose graver indicated the date of the successful naval engagement, which Röntgen had contrived to add that morning. Catherine could do no less in acknowledgment of the courtly compliment than buy the whole collection."



LOUIS XVI CLOCK

To such a point did Röntgen carry his mechanical skill and so closely associated with his name were all kinds of mechanical devices, that for years every writing-desk with a secret drawer, every cabinet with a hidden spring, has been attributed to him. Lady Dilke, who has made a careful study of the eighteenth-century furniture-makers, cites several pieces in the Kensington Museum which have been incorrectly credited to Röntgen. In speaking of a "bureau-toilette" in the Jones collection at Kensington, she says: "A curious feature of this bureau marks the treatment of the cover, which falls and presents to the hand a myriad little receptacles for paint and powder and other 'make-up' requisites. This ingenious contrivance and the light color of the inlay have been responsible for the legend which declares it to have been ordered of David Röntgen by his patroness, Queen Marie Antoinette, a story that has not the slightest foundation. At one time the name of David seems to have been applied indiscriminately to all work inlaid with light woods, when the interior contrivances presented more or less ingenious character. This is the only explanation of the attribution of Röntgen, not only of the 'bureau-toilette,' but of the

WRITING-DESK AND BUREAU-TOILETTE BELONGING TO MARIE ANTOINETTE, LATE XV STYLE

noble cabinet at Hertford House, both undoubtedly by Saunier."

The "bureau-toilette" is illustrated here. It is in the late Louis XV style and is of tulipwood inlaid with flowers and trophies. The mounts are of ormolu, exquisitely chiseled. Within are numerous pigeon-holes for letters and many little receptacles for paint and powder, showing that her majesty practiced the delicate art of make-up in common with the women of her day.

Claude-Charles Saunier, Martin Carlin, Jean Pafrat, Jean François Leleu, are represented in many of the large English collections. From various catalogues the following items are gleaned:

Hertford House—"Mahogany cabinet with Sèvres panels, designed by Carlin, mounts by Thomire. Table of amboyna wood, fluted columns, designed by Leleu, mounts attributed to Gouthière. Table of wood and gilt metal porphyry slab, mounts by Gouthière. Corner cupboard of mahogany, marquetry by Riesener, mounts by Thomire. Cabinet of amboyna wood and ormolu, by Riesener, mounts by Thomire. Chairs of carved and gilt wood, coverings of Beauvais tapestry. Corner cupboard, designed by Saunier."

South Kensington Museum—"Work-table, tulipwood and ormolu, by Carlin and Pafrat. Corner cupboard, marquetry, by Oeben. Commode, marquetry, by Riesener."

Windsor Castle—"Sideboard in mahogany and ormolu, with Sèvres panels, by Martin Carlin. Mahogany cabinet with bronze mounts, bearing the arms of France and Savoy. Secrétaire of tulipwood with bronze mounts, by Röntgen."

These items, brief as they are, indicate the trend of the Louis XVI style, so far as the choice of woods and metals are concerned. They also show the importance given to the maker's name. French designers of the eighteenth century signed their

work precisely as the painters signed their canvases, and who shall say that they were lesser artists?

Mahogany had been growing in popularity since the middle of the century, and walnut which had so long been the chief medium of French furniture-makers, had gradually lost favor. Walnut was not discarded, but it was more often gilded and enameled than used in its natural state. For chairs and couches, and for all pieces where upholstery was utilized, walnut was the usual foundation. The enameling to which the wood was treated was in soft colors and exceedingly durable. Many of the Louis XVI chairs, sofas, and bedsteads show this delicate finish which to-day exhibits little trace of wear. The gilded furniture belongs to another class, although the designs are often similar. Many of the glided chairs are combined with cane. Sometimes the natural cane is set in a gilded frame, and again the cane is gilded and the wood enameled. Another style combines cane with natural walnut which is most attractive of all. Modern furniture-makers have lately revived this fashion. With a consistent setting these cane pieces are exceedingly effective.

Marie Antoinette, in furnishing the Petit Trianon made a most effective use of cane. It suited the simplicity which she delighted to affect when she retired to the Trianon. The queen, brought up in the Austrian court which was less formal than that of France, spent her happiest hours in the picturesque building which Louis XV erected for the duchess du Barry. Here she could escape the etiquette of the court and live as independently as she pleased, even playing dairy-maid when the whim seized her. The English garden, the poultry-house, the mill, the grotto, and the dairy are still in existence, and are scarcely less interesting than the Little Trianon itself.

LOUIS XVI CHAIR, PETIT TRIANON

Gabriel, the royal architect, built the main edifice which bears somewhat the same relation architecturally to the Grand Trianon that the Grand Trianon does to Versailles. "The Petit Trianon is rather a handsome country house than a palace," says a writer of the period. Its walls are ornamented with sculptural festoons of oak leaves, and the balustrade is of gilt bronze in designs of lyres and quivers, horns of plenty and the inter-

laced letters M. A. The antechamber has a Greek portal, and within is paneled in a severe but elegant style with a cornice of palmettes and painted rectangular panels over the doors. The dining-room opens immediately from it. The ornaments on the panels, trophies of quivers and crowns, were placed there by the order of the queen. The main salon is furnished in crimson and gold. The boudoir is charming, with its simple but beautifully wrought moldings, its panels relieved by delicately modeled arabesques, and its simple mantel garniture of two Sèvres vases and branches for candles in gilt bronze."

The rooms described may be taken as typical of the Louis XVI period. They did not surpass the furnishings of many private houses. Paneled woodwork ornamented with arabesques and trophies formed the usual decoration of side walls. The furniture of the main salon consisted of six straight-back chairs, two arm-chairs, a *bergère*, or chair with upholstered sides, two sofas, and several tables.

In studying Louis XVI chairs two general types are observed: one is composed entirely of angles; the other makes a partial use of the oval. The arm-chair on page 129 is a fine illustration of the first class. The chair reproduced on this page belongs to the second. The fluted support is shown in both types and this feature, it may be added, is the most marked characteristic of Louis XVI furniture.

LOUIS XVI CHAIR, PETIT TRIANON.

CHAPTER XII

ENGLISH FURNITURE OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE STYLE: FIRST, QUEEN ANNE WHICH WAS A DEVELOPMENT OF THE DUTCH TYPES OF THE LATE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY. SECOND, CHIPPENDALE THE LEADING FEATURES BEING THE BALL-AND-CLAW FOOT, THE PIERCED SPLAT, AND THE CABRIOLE LEG. THIRD, ADAM, INAUGURATING A REVIVAL OF CLASSIC ORNAMENT. FOURTH, HEPPLEWHITE, IMPORTANT DETAILS OF WHICH WERE THE STRAIGHT TAPERING LEG, THE SHIELD-SHAPED CHAIR BACK, AND THE SPADE-FOOT. FIFTH, SHERATON, SALIENT CHARACTERISTICS BEING THE FLUTED LEG, THE RECTANGULAR CHAIR BACK, AND CLASSIC CARVING AND INLAY.

CHAPTER XII

ENGLISH FURNITURE OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

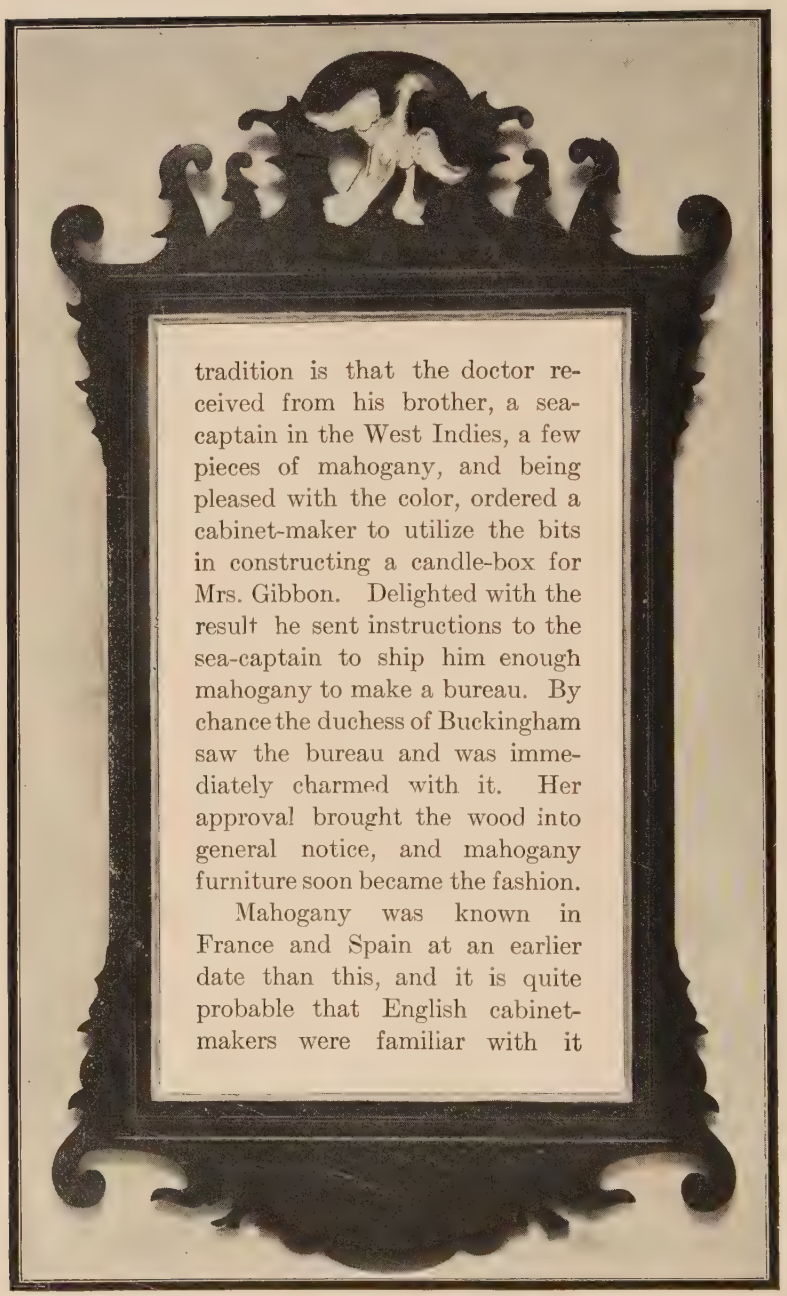
THE WORK OF THOMAS CHIPPENDALE

AMONG English furniture-makers the name of Thomas Chippendale stands first. Other designers have surpassed him in certain lines, but to none has the same amount of fame been accorded. Chippendale was the first Englishman to give title to a style. Celebrated designers had preceded him, but their identity is submerged in that of their sovereign. We hear little of a George I, a George II, or a George III period. Queen Anne's name is associated with the furniture types of the early eighteenth century. Victorian is the term given to the furniture development of the first half of the nineteenth century. Between these two reigns styles in furniture are known by the names of the men who created them.

Chippendale was more a translator than a creator. He adapted Dutch, French, and Chinese designs infusing his own personality into everything he touched. His early work was largely tinctured by that of Grinling Gibbons, a contemporary and co-worker of Sir Christopher Wren. Gibbons's influence on interior work was almost as potent as was that of Wren on the architecture of the day. Chippendale owed much to this man whose fame has been overshadowed by some of his followers.

All furniture-makers of the first half of the eighteenth century were indebted to the Dutch. Chippendale used the cabriole or bandy-leg freely, also the ball-and-claw foot, and the fiddle-back. Other designers did the same, but Chippendale combined them with greater success. It is hardly to be wondered at that these characteristics are termed "Chippendale," for it was he who gave them lasting fame.

How the world would rate Chippendale and his contemporaries if oak and walnut had been their only medium is impossible to say. What English furniture of the eighteenth century would have been if mahogany had been unknown is difficult to conjecture. The firmness of the wood, coupled with the fine quality of the grain, enabled furniture-makers to secure results which were unattainable in oak. It is not too much to say that the great English cabinet-makers of the eighteenth century could not have achieved their triumphs without the aid of this beautiful medium. By its use designers obtained both strength and delicacy, characteristics which were united for the first time. The introduction of this wood has long been credited to one Dr. Gibbon, an English physician and the date is placed at 1724. The



tradition is that the doctor received from his brother, a sea-captain in the West Indies, a few pieces of mahogany, and being pleased with the color, ordered a cabinet-maker to utilize the bits in constructing a candle-box for Mrs. Gibbon. Delighted with the result he sent instructions to the sea-captain to ship him enough mahogany to make a bureau. By chance the duchess of Buckingham saw the bureau and was immediately charmed with it. Her approval brought the wood into general notice, and mahogany furniture soon became the fashion.

Mahogany was known in France and Spain at an earlier date than this, and it is quite probable that English cabinet-makers were familiar with it

CHIPPENDALE'S DUTCH TYPE, I

A Collection of Most Elegant and Useful Designs of Household Furniture. Calculated to Improve and Refine the Present Taste, and Suited to Persons in All Degrees of Life. Many of the designs in the book were extremely rococo and showed how close a student the author was of the Louis XV school; some were executed in "the Gothic manner," others in the "Chinese taste." A list of the "Most Elegant and Useful Designs of Household Furniture, in the Most Fashionable Taste," included: before Dr. Gibbon and his candle-box became famous.

Chippendale worked in many veins, adapting his craft to the taste and purse of his patrons. His book, *The Gentleman and Cabinet-Maker's Director*, shows a variety of designs executed in the French, Chinese, and Gothic styles. The third edition appeared in 1762, and by that time Chippendale's fame was firmly established. The sub-title stated that it was

CHIPPENDALE CHAIR, II

Chairs, sofas, beds, and couches; china-tables, dressing-tables, shaving-tables, bason-stands, and teakettle-stands; frames for marble-slabs, bureau-dressing-tables, and commodes; writing-tables, and library-tables; library bookcases, organ-cases for private rooms, or churches, desks and book-cases; dressing and writing-tables with book-cases, cabinets, and cloaths-presses; china-cases, china-shelves, and book-shelves; candle-stands, terms for busts, stands for china jars and pedestals; cisterns for water, lanthorns, and chandeliers; fire-screens, brackets, and clock cases; pier-glasses and table-frames; girandoles, chimney-pieces, and picture-frames; stove-grates, boarders, frets, Chinese-railing, and brass-work, for furniture,

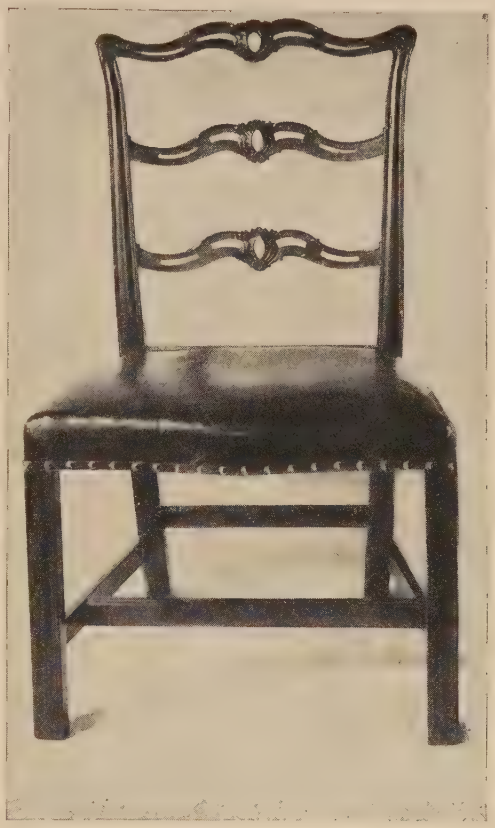
from which it may be seen that the designer of St. Martin's Lane could design stove-grates and lanterns as well as organ-cases.

Sideboards are not mentioned in the *Director* and it is doubtful if Chippendale made these pieces. Many articles long attributed to Chippendale are now credited to Hepplewhite and Shearer. It is conceded by students of furniture that Chippendale did not inlay any of his handiwork. The many beautiful cabinets and sideboards, standing on straight, tapering legs, and having for their sole decoration narrow lines of inlay which have long been called "Chippendale," are, in reality, after the manner of Hepplewhite. The serpentine sideboards are believed to have been designed by Thomas Shearer who was associated with Hepplewhite.

CHIPPENDALE ARM-CHAIR, III

Carving was Chippendale's mode of decoration and in his beautiful chairs it found its best expression. Five distinct types are illustrated here and show the versatility of this renowned chair-maker. The first is the sturdy Dutch type to which Chippendale gave such vitality. The cabriole leg, the club foot, the heavy

underbracing, are of Dutch origin. The pierced splat is Chippendale translation of the fiddle-back. In the second illustration the braces have been altered, and the curved Dutch leg gives place to the square, straight leg. The arm-chair is its companion and shows the designer at high-water mark. Here is grace coupled with comfort, and a restraint which is often lacking in his later chairs. That Chippendale himself thought lightly of this design and preferred his French, Chinese, and Gothic chairs, is well known. Of his fantastic "ribbon-backs," he once said, "If I may speak without vanity, they are the best that I have seen, and perhaps the best that have been made." And again, "There may be better chairs, but I doubt it."



LADDER-BACK CHAIR, IV

In America these elaborate pieces are seldom seen, and perhaps it is for this reason that "Chippendale" to us always stands for the beautiful. Many of the rococo designs were made for wealthy patrons and were never duplicated. Others were made for royalty and the drawings immediately destroyed. The best work of the man was undoubtedly done when there was a restriction in regard to the cost. Then, as now, too much money was a detriment. When a fabulous sum was asked for a single piece of furniture the money had to show somewhere, and that was on the surface. If Thomas Chippendale could have foreseen that these designs would one day be held up to ridicule, while on the other hand some of his simple patterns would sell for fabulous sums, he would have doubted the sanity of posterity.

Among his "simple" pieces may be reckoned the ladder-back chair which is reproduced in the fourth illustration. This embodies the fine proportions which have justly given him the title of prince of chair-makers. The "roundabout" illustrates another phase of his work, while his French manner is depicted in illustration VI.

CHIPPENDALE ROUNDABOUT, V

Card-tables, sofas, settees, desks, bureaus, and bookcases came from Chippendale's shop in quantities. His sofas and settees follow the same lines as his chairs; his card-tables usually have the ball-and-claw foot, with intricate carving; the bureaus and commodes are less typical and combine features which partake of many styles. In the English definition of the word "bureau," a chest of drawers was not implied. The term was used to describe secretaries and commodes. Few of Chippendale's "bureaus" are found in America. In the Warner House in Portsmouth is a beautiful bookcase which is attributed to Chippendale, and a comparison with authenticated pieces in England lends probability to the theory. The case fills one side of the room and contains a drop lid which may be used for writing purposes.

While to Chippendale belongs the glory of raising his work above his contemporaries of the middle portion of the century, the work of other men must not be forgotten. Grinling Gibbons has been mentioned; James Gibbs, Isaac Ware, and William Kent followed him. Coming a little later were Abraham Swan, Batty and Thomas Langley, Edwards and Darley, Thomas Johnson, Ince, and Robert Manwaring. These men were notable in special lines. Batty and Thomas Langley were famous for their pier-tables and consoles; Edwards and Darley were exponents of the Chinese taste; Thomas Johnson was the high priest of the extreme rococo; Manwaring and Richardson were contemporaneous with the Adam brothers, and were identified with the work of their day.

One name should be given special prominence and that is Richard Gillow whose work was of unusual merit, and to whom may possibly belong the honor of originating the shield-shape chair. Richard Gillow was son of Robert Gillow who achieved fame earlier in the century. If Gillow had written a book he might have been a rival of both Chippendale and Hepplewhite. His work on paper was confined to his working drawings which show ability of a high order. Many of his finest pieces were executed for the Adam brothers whose commissions were greatly

prized by cabinet-makers. The work of this designer was signed, a custom which, we regret, was not universal among English cabinet-makers.

The shield or heart-shaped chair is associated with Hepplewhite, yet Chippendale, Gillow, Shearer, Sheraton, all used it. It was Hepplewhite who gave it special prominence and it is Hepplewhite's name which is now associated with it. Doubtless these designers borrowed largely from each other, adapting various characteristics to suit the commission in hand.

CHIPPENDALE'S
FRENCH MANNER, VI

The fame of these great furniture-makers rests on their representative work, not on their creations *en masse*. Nor is it so much a question of the invention of a style, as whose individuality was strong enough to perpetuate it. On this score we ascribe to Chippendale the pierced back and the ball-and-claw foot; to Hepplewhite the shield-back and the straight, tapering foot; and to Sheraton the rectangular back and the fluted leg. That these men could be "myriad minded" in their designing we know from their books, but we judge them by their typical furniture and rate them accordingly.

THE WORK OF GEORGE HEPPLEWHITE

Less is known of Hepplewhite than of either of his great contemporaries. His death occurred in 1786; the date of his birth is a matter of conjecture. For many years a mystery has surrounded the names "G. Hepplewhite" and "A. Hepplewhite" which has of late been solved. Research has revealed the fact that the business of George Hepplewhite, after his death, passed into the hands of his widow Alice, who continued the work of the firm over the signature of "A. Hepplewhite and Company." Thus the long controversy as to the relationship of the two is satisfactorily settled. The theory that "G." and "A." Hepplewhite were brothers is set at rest.

That this designer personally made, or even supervised, half of the furniture bearing his name, is out of the question. Craftsmen trained in his methods perpetuated the work. Hepplewhite's book, *The Cabinet-maker and Upholster's Guide*, appeared the year following his demise and was completed by other hands. It is believed that Thomas Shearer, who was associated with him, made many of the drawings contained in the work. Shearer's identity seems to have been lost in that of Hepplewhite. An English critic, in writing of him, says: "Whether Shearer in-

fluenced Hepplewhite or Hepplewhite Shearer is a question to which we are not likely to find a definite answer; yet as a considerable portion of Sheraton's style was founded on Shearer's lines, the presumption is that if a man of such very decided personality was affected, Hepplewhite was no less indebted to this great but practically forgotten designer." And again:

"In bookcases Shearer is very strong. His eye for proportion is indisputable, and it is only his occasionally uncertain use of inlay and ornament which would prevent us placing him first in this particular department. Even as these stand they are better than Hepplewhite's, and there can be little doubt of their influence on Sheraton."

Shearer is believed to have originated the serpentine sideboard and Hepplewhite to have brought it to perfection. A fine specimen illustrated on page 143 has all the characteristics of this designer. The serpentine curve, the straight, tapering legs, the spade-feet, and the peculiar inlay, all show this master hand. Hepplewhite used inlay most effectively. The legs of his tables and sideboards are sometimes ornamented with delicate vertical patterns in sycamore and tulipwood. The meander pattern was a favorite with him and so was the Greek fret. In this work the influence of the Adam brothers is plainly discernible. The urn-shaped finials used by Shearer and Sheraton, and in a slighter degree by Hepplewhite, are in the "Adam style." Knife-boxes in this form were made by all three of the designers, and are among the most attractive of small pieces of furniture. Dressing-tables with heart-shaped mirrors, cabinets with long, tapering legs, and tables of many forms, are among Hepplewhite's designs. His shield-shaped chairs have doubtless brought

SHIELD-SHAPED CHAIR, HEPPLEWHITE

him greatest renown. An unusually fine example of this style is reproduced here. It is more elaborate than much of his work, yet full of refinement and dignity. Robert Adam never handled the urn with greater skill. The details are remarkably fine, and place Hepplewhite above the reproach that his chairs were usually faulty in construction.

HEPPLEWHITE TABLE

A rare design is the oval-back chair containing the Prince of Wales plumes, shown on page 144. The spade-foot, which is one of the distinctive features of this designer's work, is illustrated in both chairs. Pieces of furniture in the Hepplewhite style are numerous in this country, and are among the most interesting of colonial possessions. R. S. Clouston, writing of English cabinet-makers, says:

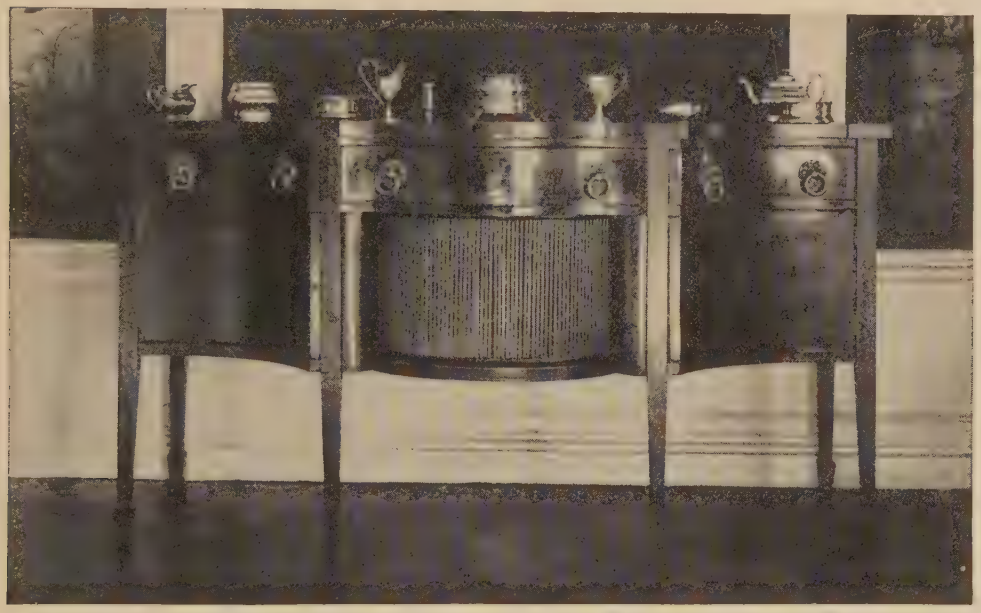
"Personally, I am unable to rank Hepplewhite with Chippendale on the one side or Sheraton on the other, either in construction or design, yet there is an undefinable charm about his work, even when faulty by rule, which, like some old song, touches a higher and more human note than can be attained by mere correctness."

THE WORK OF JAMES AND ROBERT ADAM

To many people the name Adam is vaguely associated with a severe type of interior woodwork, variously called colonial, Georgian, and Louis XVI. To others the term signifies a few ornamental details found in old furniture, such as the fluted column, the festoon, the garland, and the band of ribbon. The real work of Robert Adam and that of his brother James is seldom considered. To them was largely due the reaction that took place in English handicraft about the middle of the eighteenth century. The Adams were architects but their influence did not end with the architecture of the period. It extended over all the arts and found an echo in this country. The real worth of these gifted men cannot be measured by the buildings they erected, although these have stood the test of time, nor can it be reckoned by the interiors they designed, successful as their work in this field will always be considered. It must be estimated by the impetus they gave the arts as a whole—an impetus towards simplicity.

DINING-ROOM, RESIDENCE OF FREDERIC C. BARTLETT, CHICAGO, HEPPLEWHITE FURNITURE

The brothers did not create the style which bears their name. They adapted to English conditions a style old as ornament itself, and which in France had already gained a footing, later to blossom as the Louis XVI school. Robert Adam, on his return from Italy, whither he had gone with the French architect Clerisseau, found England ripe for a second reformation. The work of the great French designers of Louis XV's reign was being copied in England, but without the delicacy of



HEPPLEWHITE SIDEBOARD

touch which made the eccentricities of such men as Meissonier almost excusable. One glance at the early drawings of Chippendale, Johnson, and Ince show with what a heavy hand the English designer wielded rococo ornament. When Sir William Chambers introduced the Chinese style of decoration, and a few so-called "oriental" details were grafted upon the rococo hodgepodge, the time was at hand for an artistic upheaval. At this point Robert Adam, fresh from the study of antique ornament in Italy and Spalatio, arrived in England. The year was 1754—a memorable one in English annals. From this moment the reformation began, insignificant at first, but gathering force as its influence widened.

In 1764 Adam published a folio of drawings, engraved by Bartolozzi, showing the ruins of the Emperor Diocletian's palace at Spalatio. In an introduction to the

work he stated that his "object in selecting this ruin for special examination was its residential character, as the knowledge of classical architecture in England is confined to public buildings." In 1778 the brothers, James and Robert, began the publication of their *Works in Architecture*, a series of folios containing their most important designs. These books were of great value and were used by architects and decorators on both sides of the Atlantic.

Few of the interiors designed by the brothers are now in existence. Number 25 Portland Square, the house built by Robert for himself, has been little altered, and one or two other dwellings have shared a like kindly fate. But the beautiful rooms of Sion House, of Kenwood, and of the Earl of Derby's mansion in Grosvenor Square, exist only in the fine old engravings which are a lasting legacy of the Adam brothers. The drawings of the library in Sion House, the seat of the earl of Northumberland, of the "great room" at Kenwood, the residence of Lord Mansfield, and of the "withdrawing-rooms" in the earl of Derby's house, show what masters of detail these princely designers were.

PRINCE OF WALES CHAIR, HEPPLEWHITE

The characteristics of the Adam style were, to quote from an old writer, "simplicity, elegant slenderness, and low relief." "In their fine sense of proportion," says another critic, "in their chaste taste in the selection and disposition of niches, lunettes, festoons, and other classical ornament, the brothers Adam have never been excelled."

They made use of the urn, the laurel leaf, the arabesque, the oval pateræ, the acanthus, the ribbon band, and the garland. Many of these details appear in the Louis XVI decorations. The difference between the Louis XVI style and the Adam style lies in the application of the ornament rather than in the ornament itself.

The brothers carried their classic tastes to a very fine point, bestowing on the furniture and metal appointments of the rooms they designed as much thought as they gave to the ceilings, doors, and mantels. Some of their most charming work is seen in their locks and escutcheons for furniture, vases for candles, stands and brackets for lamps, and frames for mirrors. Interesting examples of their designing in this line may be noted in the illustrations of the vase and bracket for candles made for the countess of Derby, and in the lock for a cabinet door made for the duke of Northumberland.

HEPPLEWHITE TABLE

The Adams regarded the Grosvenor Square house as their masterpiece, and one of their folios is largely devoted to the rooms and furniture of this mansion. The great drawing-room, where the countess of Derby entertained so lavishly, was pronounced by Robert to be one of the "most elegant in Europe." The chimney-piece of this apartment shows what delicacy and force these artists could impart to large surfaces. All the decorations and appointments of the smaller rooms were planned with the same regard for detail. The private suite of the countess was conceded to be the finest of its kind in London. The furniture was designed by James and executed under his direction.

The influence of the Adam brothers on the furniture-makers of their time was very marked. The later work of Hepplewhite, and more especially that of Sheraton, was largely shaped by them. The latter acknowledged his indebtedness in a graceful tribute dedicated to Robert. Sheraton did not imitate—he was too great for that—but he embodied in his furniture a feeling for simplicity which he himself was generous enough to attribute to the brothers. In this country the Adam type of furniture is best known by the work of Sheraton. The fine sideboards with urn-shaped knife-boxes made by him are splendid examples of the Adam style.

When Robert Adam returned from Italy, Pergolesi and Bartolozzi accompanied

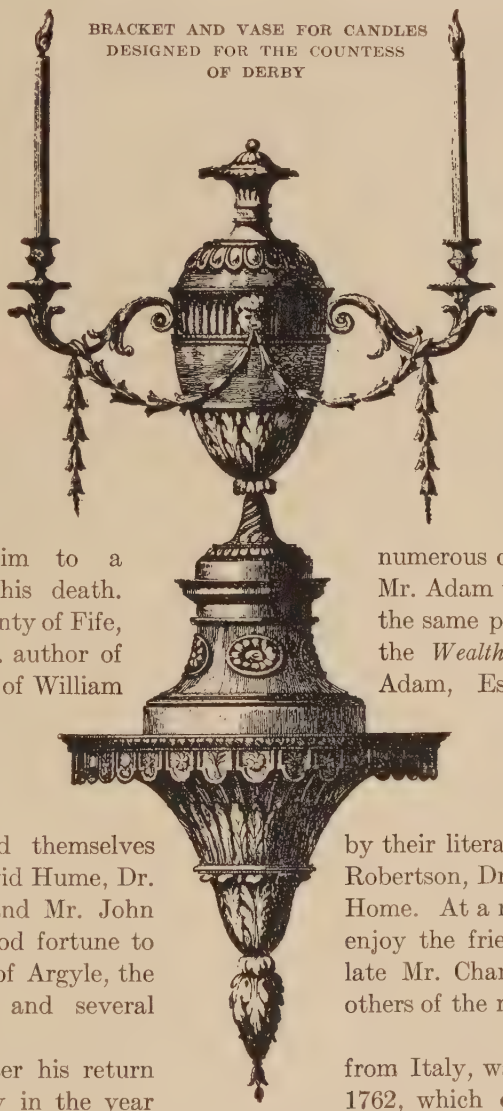
ADAM COMMODE DESIGNED FOR COUNTESS OF DERBY
PAINTED BY PERGOLESI

him. Pergolesi executed many of the decorations designed by the brothers, and in this work he was assisted by Cipriani, another Italian, and by that gifted woman, Angelica Kauffman. Furniture was designed in harmony with the walls and painted in gold and enamels.

Strong as the influence of the Adam brothers was in England it was scarcely less in this country. America owes these men an everlasting debt of gratitude, for to them is largely due our finest architecture. Many of the houses erected in New England and the South from 1780 to 1810 were built on lines laid down by Robert and James Adam. The beautiful rooms of these old mansions are as truly Adam as the interiors of Kenwood, Sion House, and Portland Place. To the American mind the colonial woodwork is the finer, being simpler, and marked by greater restraint.

Robert Adam shared honors with James and to-day their names are seldom separated. Robert was undoubtedly the master of the two, possessing the creative faculty to a rare degree. Aside from his work the story of his life reads briefly. In *The Gentleman's Magazine* for March, 1792, is a short but significant biography.

England lost two of her greatest men within one month, and both are honored in this quaint pamphlet. Under the heading, "Obituary of Considerable Persons,"



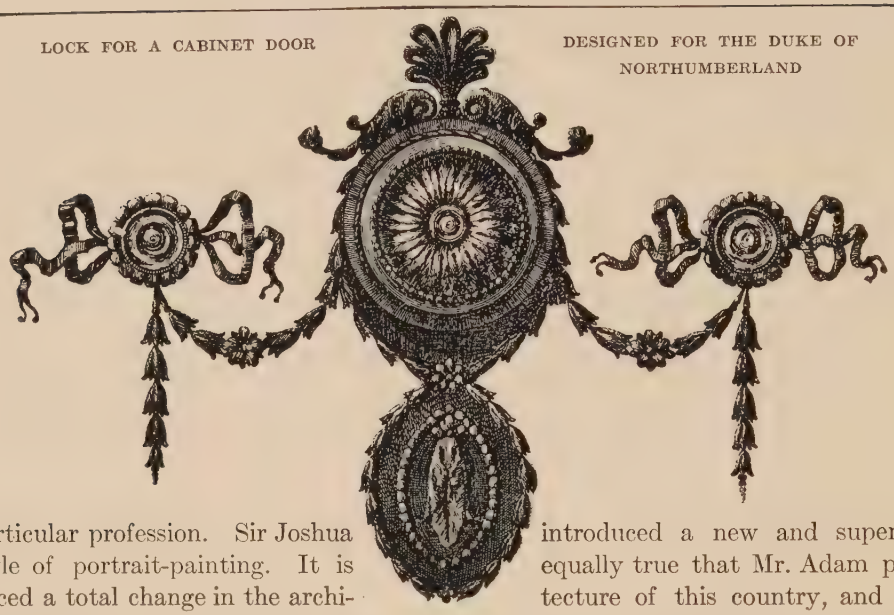
BRACKET AND VASE FOR CANDLES DESIGNED FOR THE COUNTESS OF DERBY

the death of Rob ert Adam and Sir Joshua Reynolds is recorded. Obituary notes are rather solemn reading, but these brief articles contain much that is interesting. With the exception of the many capitals and the long *s*, the first sketch is faithfully reproduced.

"At his house in Albermarle Street, Robert Adam, Esq., architect, Fellow of the Royal Antiquarian Society of London and Edinburgh. The many elegant buildings, public and private, erected in various parts of the kingdom by Mr. Adam will remain lasting monuments of his taste and genius. And the natural suavity of his manners joined to the excellence of his moral character have endeared him to a numerous circle of friends, who will long lament his death. Mr. Adam was born in 1728, at Kirkaldy, in the county of Fife, the same place that gave birth to Dr. Adam Smith, author of the *Wealth of Nations*. He was the second son of William Adam, Esq., of Marybury, an architect of merit. He received his education at the University of Edinburgh. The friendships he formed were with men who have since emi-nently distinguished themselves by their literary products, among them being Mr. David Hume, Dr. Robertson, Dr. Adam Smith, Dr. Adam Fergusson, and Mr. John Home. At a more advanced time of life he had the good fortune to enjoy the friendship and society of Archibald, duke of Argyle, the late Mr. Charles Townsend, the earl of Mansfield, and several others of the most illustrious men of the age.

"Mr. Adam, after his return from Italy, was appointed architect to his Majesty in the year 1762, which office, being incompatible with a seat in Parliament, he resigned in 1768, on his being elected to represent the county of Kinross. It is somewhat remarkable that the arts should be deprived at the same time of two of their greatest ornaments, Sir Joshua Reynolds and Mr. Adam, and it is difficult to say which of them excelled more in his

LOCK FOR A CABINET DOOR DESIGNED FOR THE DUKE OF NORTHUMBERLAND



particular profession. Sir Joshua introduced a new and superior style of portrait-painting. It is equally true that Mr. Adam produced a total change in the architecture of this country, and his fertile genius in elegant ornament was not confined to the decoration of buildings, but has been diffused into almost every branch of manufacture. His talents extended beyond the line of his profession. The loss of Mr. Adam at this time must be peculiarly felt, as the new University of Edinburgh and other great public works, both in that city and in Glasgow, were erecting from his designs and under his direction. To the last period of his life Mr. Adam displayed an unusual vigor of genius and refinement of taste; for in the space of one year preceding his death he designed eight great public works and twenty-five private buildings, so various in their style and so beautiful in their composition that they have been allowed by the best judges sufficient of themselves to establish his fame unrivaled as an artist."

It is impossible to show the charm of the Adam style with a few illustrations. No adequate conception of the talents of the brothers can be gained from isolated examples of their work. The mantels and doors designed by them lose half their beauty when removed from the original setting. Thus the reproduction of the door to the Etruscan room in the Grosvenor Square house, and that of the chimney-piece in the same mansion, give little hint of the Adam genius. Viewed with their surroundings they become successful details of a very harmonious whole. The Adam decorations, more than that of any other style, with the possible exception of the Louis XV, lose by being separated from the construction. The watchword of the brothers was "harmony," and this quality in their work can be appreciated only when a room or series of rooms is studied. There are reprints of the interiors of

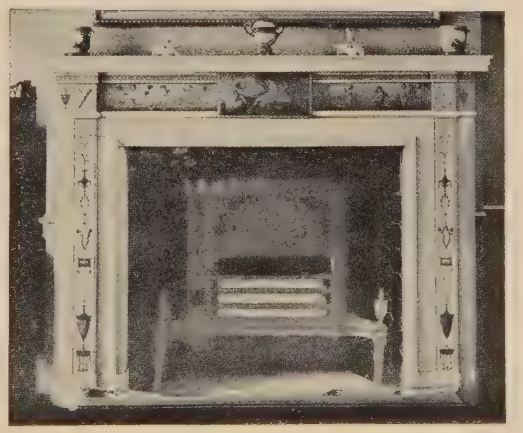
Sion House, Kenwood, Queen's House, and the mansions in Portland Place and Grosvenor Square, and these are as useful from the student's standpoint as the now priceless first editions. These books are worth volumes of descriptions.

Many learned writers have discoursed extensively on the work of James and Robert Adam, but few have so intelligently expressed the point of the matter as did Robert himself in the preface of his first book:

"If we have any claim to approbation we found it on this alone: that we have been able to seize, with some degree of success, the beautiful spirit of antiquity, and to transfuse it with novelty and variety through all our numerous works."

THE WORK OF THOMAS SHERATON.

Thomas Sheraton, last of the great English furniture-makers, was born in 1751, three years before Thomas Chippendale published *The Gentleman and Cabinet-Maker's Director.* "Last and least" cannot be said of Sheraton. "Last and greatest" expresses the opinion of many latter-day critics. A recent writer on the inexhaustible subject of eighteenth-century furniture, says of him: "Much as one may appreciate the workmanship of Chippendale and Hepplewhite, in the presence of a true piece of Sheraton's work one cannot help feeling that their productions are coarse, almost blatant—that they were workmen, while Sheraton was a poet, and a poet blessed with color." This is strong praise, but it comes from the pen of an Englishman who has studied his subject deeply. No American could truthfully call Chippendale "blatant," unless he used the word in turning over the pages of the *Director.* Chippendale's fame rests on his furniture, not his drawings, and so it is with Sheraton. The great cabinet-makers who wrote *Directors, Guides,* and *Drawing-Books,* put their extravagant ideas on paper and their simple ones into furniture. With their elaborate sketches they hoped to catch the fancy of royalty; with their actual pieces of furniture they looked for every-day patronage. And so it is that the shelves of reference libraries are full of "measurements" and "scales" and lengthy "instructions" which grow gray with dust, while the supply of the real furniture is far too little to supply one half the demand. To decide which



ADAM MANTELPIECE DECORATED BY ANGELICA KAUFFMAN

is the greatest, Chippendale, Hepplewhite, or Sheraton, is an impossibility. There is one glory of the sun, and another of the moon, and another of the stars.

Chippendale was the most versatile of the three. He could be French, Chinese, or Gothic, as the occasion demanded. His imagination, as he himself admitted, was "without an equal." It was this imaginative quality that sometimes led the St. Martin's Lane furniture-maker into the realms of the fantastic—and consequently away from the paths of simplicity. Sheraton's creations have this beautiful quality combined with perfect proportion and rare restraint. Whether it be chair, table, or sideboard, there is a completeness about the design that leaves little to be desired. Ornament for ornament's sake was never countenanced by Sheraton. Like the Adam brothers, he decorated construction; he did not con-

SHERATON CHAIRS

struct decoration.

Coming after Chippendale and Hepplewhite, this designer learned much from their methods. Discarding the plain, tapering support, he selected the fluted form of the Louis XVI style which the Adams had introduced into England. He made use of the fluted column in his sideboards, tables, and desks, treating it with rare restraint. In his chairs he used the square support, believing that a rectangular back demanded a rectangular base. On the same theory his use of the round and fluted leg is equally consistent, for it is always combined with a curve. The table, sofa, and chest of drawers reproduced in this chapter show the combination of the fluted support and the curved surface. The table is an extremely graceful design and makes an interesting comparison with the Hepplewhite table illustrated on page 141. These designs are of the "drop leaf" type, the leaf of the table following the outlines of the supports. The square, tapering leg of the Hepplewhite table is in perfect harmony with the top, which, though curved, is completed by square corners. Sheraton's design meets the same test, the rounded corners outlining the curved supports.

A FINE EXAMPLE OF SHERATON'S WORK

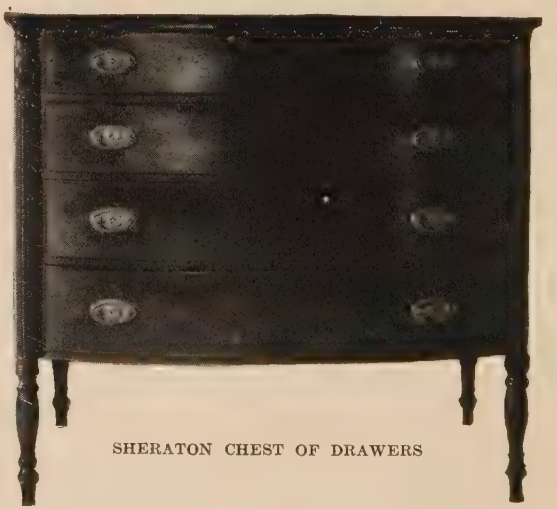
The chest of drawers, or bureau in our modern acceptance of the word, is an excellent example of Sheraton's principle of construction. Here again we see the curved front in conjunction with the rounded support. The fluted column begins at the top of the second drawer and ends at the base of the lower drawer. Above the fluting is the "corn and husk" *motif* executed in a conventionalized manner; below is a turned leg of admirable proportions. The drawers have narrow moldings and brass handles of a simple pattern. Narrow beading outlines each plate which is further decorated by a small rosette.

The sofa is a typical example of Sheraton's work, having the fluted support and delicate carvings in low relief. The back of the sofa shows the festoon pattern used so freely by the Adam brothers in their interiors.

SHERATON DROP-LEAF TABLE

Sheraton's chairs are easily distinguished from those of Chippendale and Hepplewhite. He seldom used the shield-back of the latter and never the pierced splat of the former. His treatment of the shield or heart-shaped back was unlike that of Hepplewhite. The top of the shield was straighter and the carving much more severe. In America this type of chair is seldom seen. Sheraton's fame as a chair-maker on this side of the water rests almost entirely on the rectangular back, an excellent example of which is illustrated on page 150.

Sheraton furniture may be divided into three classes—carved, inlaid, and painted. To the first division belong the pieces illustrated here, together with the beautiful sideboards, which are perhaps most characteristic of all Sheraton's designs. His desks, bookcases, and writing-tables belong also to this class, but are less familiar in America than in England. In the second list may be grouped the graceful drop-leaf tables, ornamented with narrow lines of inlay, the pretty tea-trays, knife-cases, and writing-boxes, the latter often showing an insert of sycamore and tulip-wood. The third division includes the furniture designed by Sheraton and decorated by Angelica Kauffman, Pergolesi, and Cipriani. Many of these pieces were executed for the Adam brothers and were of exquisite workmanship. Satinwood formed the basis of the larger portion of this work, and when decorated suggested Italian "gesso." The Kensington Museum contains splendid



SHERATON CHEST OF DRAWERS

specimens of this furniture, and occasional pieces are found in private collections.

SHERATON SIDE-BOARD AND CHIPPENDALE MIRROR

Like Hepplewhite and Chippendale, Sheraton worked largely in mahogany, but he did not confine himself to this wood. Sycamore, harewood, tulipwood, and kingwood he used liberally in his smaller pieces of furniture. He wielded the highly colored woods as a painter does his pigments, and it is on this score that he is justly called a "color-poet." Harewood, which was sycamore dyed a pale shade of brown, whitewood, stained apple-green, satinwood in its lovely natural tone, and kingwood, of deeper coloring, were used by this man with marvelous skill. Other cabinet-makers combined these woods but, never on English soil, with such consummate art.

Sheraton was a many-sided genius and met the fate of the man who does many things well. He lived and died poor. Adam Black to whom the world is indebted for most of its knowledge of Sheraton's private life has written graphically of the cabinet-maker in his "Memoirs." Black was born in 1783 and died in 1872. At one time he was Lord Provost of Edinburg. In his early career he was employed by Sheraton, at a time when the great furniture-maker was devoting himself to many pursuits. Black writes: "He lived in a poor street in London, his house half shop, half dwelling, and looked himself like a Methodist preacher. He had been a cabinet-maker, and was now author, publisher, and teacher of drawing, and, I believe, occasionally, preacher." Again, he says: "This many-sided individual

is an interesting character. He is a man of talent. He is a scholar, writes well, and, in my opinion, draws masterly. We may be ready to ask how comes it to pass that a man with such abilities and resources is in such a state? I believe his abilities and resources are his ruin in this respect, for by attempting to do everything he does nothing."

"Would that most people's 'nothing' might prove to be as much," says B. Wyllie, Esq., the Englishman already quoted. "I find myself wondering," he adds, "if his paintings and his writings would have given as much pleasure to the world as his furniture has undoubtedly given, supposing he had been able to devote himself to those arts."

CHAPTER XIII

FURNITURE OF THE FRENCH EMPIRE

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE STYLE: THE TORCH, THE WREATH, THE SPHINX, THE ATHENIAN BEES, AND THE GREEK HONEYSUCKLE. CARVING AND MARQUETRY WERE DISCARDED AND PLAIN SURFACES WERE COVERED WITH CHISELED MOUNTS OF BRASS AND ORMOLU. SIMPLE EMPIRE TYPES WERE FULL OF BEAUTY BUT THE FINAL DEVELOPMENT WAS CLUMSY AND GROTESQUE.

CHAPTER XIII

FURNITURE OF THE FRENCH EMPIRE

THE Empire style marked the last of the great historic epochs in furniture and decoration. It was cold and formal, reflecting the personality of the men so closely identified with its development. The Revolution brought chaos to the industries of France which had so flourished under the old régime. Furniture-makers and metal-workers were thrown out of employment. Many suffered imprisonment or death by the guillotine. With few exceptions the artist-artisans of the Louis XVI period had little part in the handicraft of the Empire. Riesener, escaping the fate of Gouthière and other famous furniture-makers, designed many pieces in the new style, but his name lives in his earlier work. The Directory and the Consulate were periods of construction. In the arts the process of rebuilding is slow. David's name is associated with this transition from old forms to the new, and with him must be mentioned Charles Percier and Pierre Fontaine. Percier was architect to Napoleon during the Consulate and ranks with Fontaine as a celebrated craftsman of the period. Napoleon was not a patron of the arts, yet no monarch of the old régime had so dominated a style. The letter "N" is stamped over the entire decorative scheme of the Empire. Conquest and victory are spelled in every line.

Designers of Louis XVI's day lauded the classics, but seldom to the extent of the Empire artists and never to the glory of one man. The laurel leaves of the preceding style were rearranged and twisted into a victor's wreath. The fluted column upheld a torch. Roman and Grecian emblems were used lavishly. "Paris was to become a new Athens, Napoleon a Cæsar, and France a second Roman Empire." The craze for the antique transformed the dress of the day. Statesmen wore togas and court ladies donned the gowns of Grecian goddesses.

Architects, decorators, and furniture-makers were imbued with the spirit of the hour. The classic lived again and, if somewhat inconsistent, the enthusiasm of the day overlooked all shortcomings.

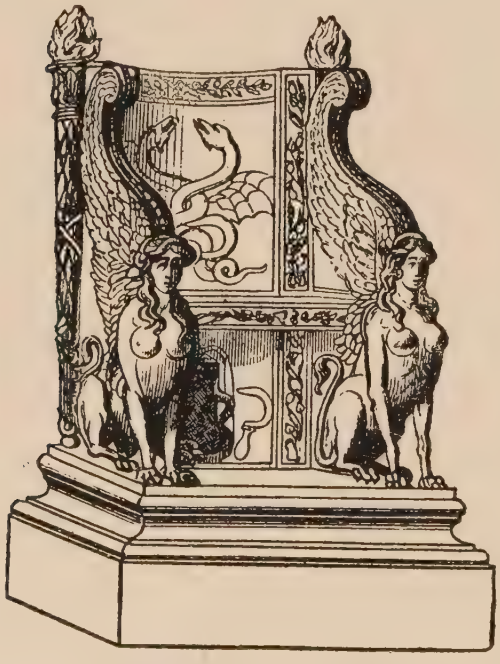
The chief characteristics of the Empire style were the wreath and torch, the Roman eagle, the Athenian bees, the Greek fret, and the honeysuckle. After the campaign in Egypt the sphinx was added to the medley and became a conspicuous feature in both furniture and decoration. Distinctive qualities of the furniture of the period are few and easily mastered. Constructively the plain column and the claw-foot are the most salient features; decoratively the wreath and torch are most

prominent. Marquetry was discarded and plain surfaces were covered with ornamental mounts of chiseled brass and ormolu. Chairs showed a square frame with a plain round leg, ornamented with mounts of characteristic patterns. The chairs in Compiègne, illustrated here, are typical of the style. Although imperial pieces they do not differ from the chairs of a private house. They are enameled white and ornamented with the Greek honeysuckle. The divan on page 160 has the antique outlines so affected by furniture-makers. David painted Madame Récamier on such a couch, the "Grecian attitude" being carefully preserved.

The carving of the Compiègne couch is in the "running laurel pattern." It was hard for craftsmen to get away from the bay leaf. When the surface to be treated was too small for a wreath, the laurel was introduced in the manner shown.

Tables may be divided into two general classes—those with a center column, terminating in a broad base with claw feet, and those of a heavier build, supported by sphinxes. The first type is well known in this country through countless "colonial" adaptations.

Beds during the period of the Empire were stately couches and form striking contrast to the luxurious beds of the French kings. Napoleon's bedchamber in Fontainebleau shows the ever-present emblems of conquest which, even in a sleeping apartment, were never absent. The torch, the eagle, and the wreath are all represented.



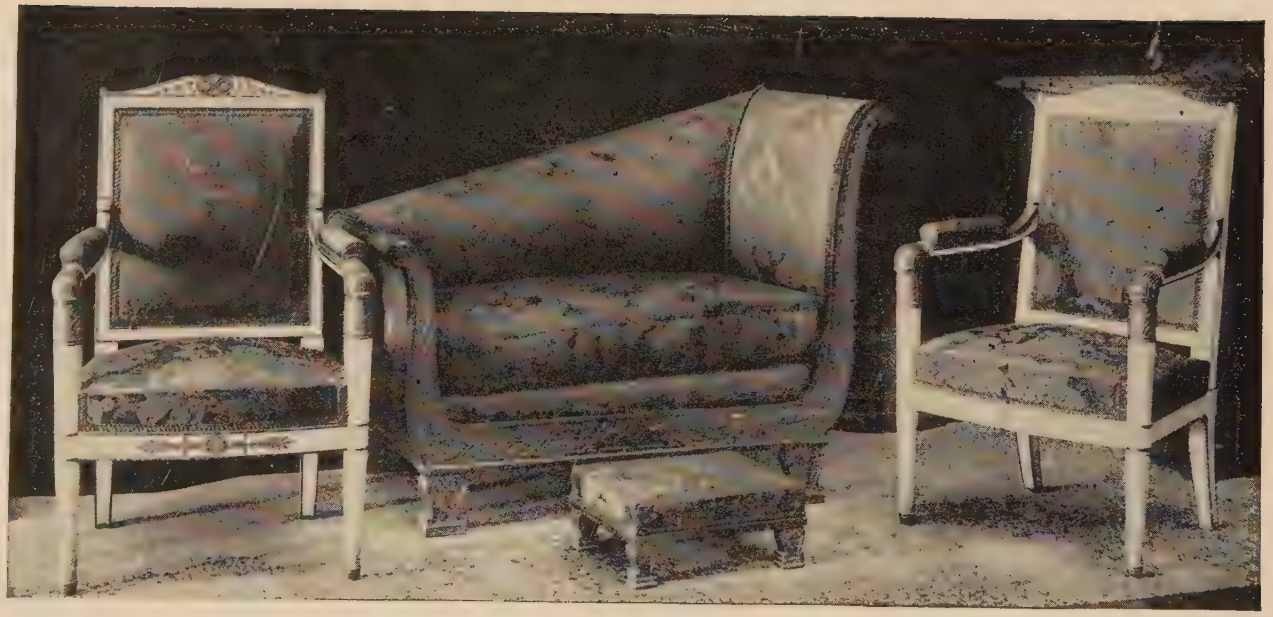
ROMAN CEREMONIAL CHAIR

The work of Percier was marked by great delicacy, but a large portion of the later work of the Empire was clumsy and absurd. Commodes and cabinets lost their real significance and became mere vehicles for the display of grandiose metal-work.

Unlike the Louis XV artisans the Empire furniture-makers lost sight of fitness. "They were too much in earnest to be content, as were the artists of the old régime, with borrowing the antique lines only to playfully transpose them by their own genius with a French grace and elegance, and to thus amalgamate them with the national style. The designers of the Empire were any-

BEDROOM OF NAPOLEON I, FONTAINEBLEAU

thing but playful in spirit. *Their* antiquity was to be actual antiquity, drawn purely from the fountain-head and admitting of no admixture. As the pieces of furniture necessary to modern comfort had greatly increased since the days of the ancients, the designers, fearful of the risk of departing from precedents, found themselves in a quandary. Not daring to create they concealed the new constructive lines by an overlay of incongruous accessories. The arm-chair was made to resemble the ancient curule seat



EMPIRE CHAIRS AND DIVAN, COMPIÈGNE

as far as possible, but when arms were to be added, the best that they could do with them was to turn them into swans' necks, and support them by cupids. The legs of the most harmless tables became bristling griffins. Flaming torches bore the cradle of the sleeping babe, a chair rested upon horns of plenty, the bed became a barge, its peaceful curtains upheld by sheaves of lances. In a word the designers were embarrassed by the self-imposed necessity for torturing the most obvious and simplest forms into symbolic paraphernalia of antiquity. Take the clock for an example. The dial, ordinarily its most salient and characteristic feature, became a mere accessory. It was blushed for as a modern thing and hidden with great ingenuity. It started out of the wheel of an antique chariot in which a warrior rode. It was set into the rock upon which Telemachus reclined. It became the globe which Aspasia carried on her knee."

In its plainer form the Empire style was full of dignity. If it lacked the charm of the graceful Louis XVI style it had, on the other hand, qualities of repose and stability which placed it far above some of its predecessors. One of the most interesting phases was the strong influence which it exerted upon American furniture-making of the early nineteenth century.

CHAPTER XIV

COLONIAL FURNITURE

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE STYLE: AFTER PIONEER DAYS THE COLONISTS MODELED THEIR HOMES ON THOSE OF THEIR NATIVE LAND. EARLY FURNITURE WAS THE HEAVY OAK OF THE OLD COUNTRY OR PINE AND DEAL PIECES MADE IN THE COLONIES. TOWARD THE END OF THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY THE TRANSITION FROM MASSIVE TO MORE GRACEFUL FORMS TOOK PLACE. THE INTRODUCTION OF MAHOGANY IN ENGLAND SOON INFLUENCED FURNITURE-MAKING ON THIS SIDE OF THE WATER, AND FOR FIFTY YEARS CHIPPENDALE, HEPPLEWHITE, AND SHERATON WERE THE GUIDING STARS OF AMERICAN DESIGNERS. EARLY IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY ENGLISH PATTERNS DECLINED IN FAVOR AND FRENCH INFLUENCE BECAME PARAMOUNT. THE EMPIRE STYLE MARKED THE END OF COLONIAL FURNITURE-MAKING.

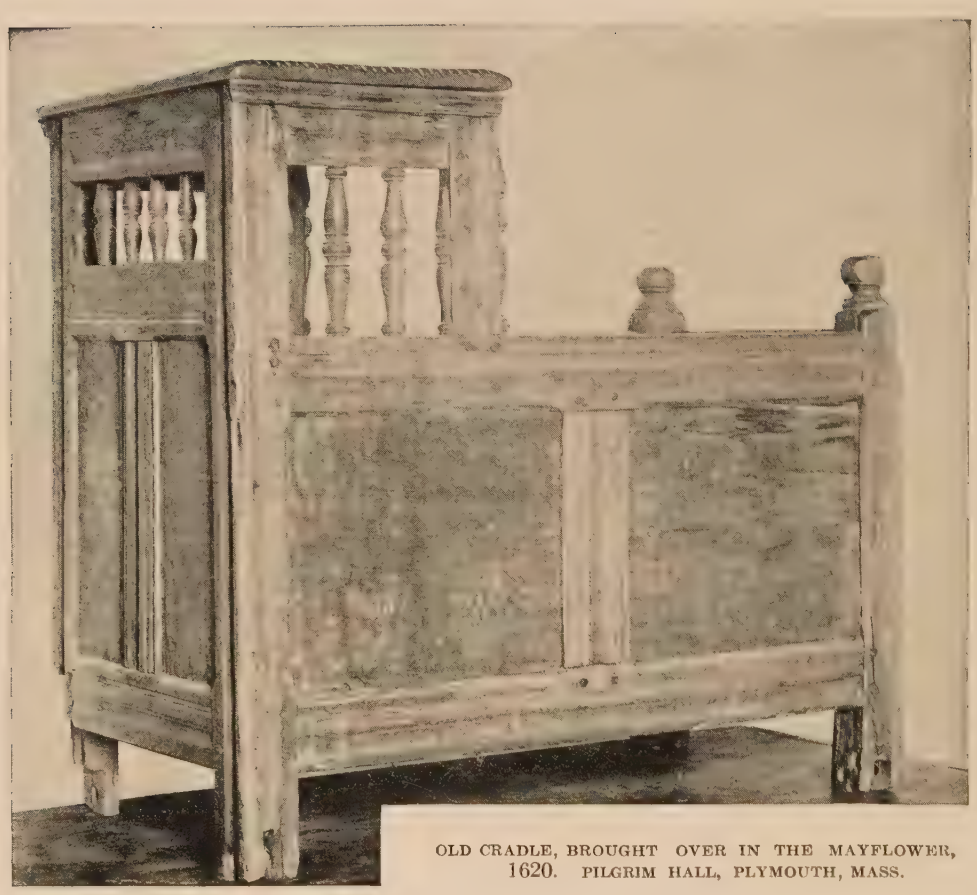
CHAPTER XIV

COLONIAL FURNITURE.

THE term "colonial furniture," used in its literal sense, includes the household effects of the colonists from the time of the settlement at Jamestown until the war of the Revolution. This restricted definition excludes the work of the great English cabinet-makers of the late eighteenth century, and all pieces which owe their origin to the style known as the Empire. Thus the furniture of Sheraton and Hepplewhite, and the later designs of Chippendale, are debarred from the category, together with all those massive mahogany shapes having carved columns and claw-feet which have long been the stronghold of colonial collections. Correctly speaking, these pieces should be classed as late Georgian and American Empire. To limit the adjective "colonial" to the furniture imported or made by the colonists prior to 1776 would disqualify more than half of the old mahogany in this country. The word has been used so long in a wider sense and has been applied so continually to everything in furniture, from the earliest possessions of the Pilgrims to the designs in vogue as late as 1820, that it is doubtful if the literal meaning is ever accepted. From one point of view the broader use of the term is the right one. It was not until 1830 that American furniture-makers ceased to be governed by the standards of the Old World. English taste in house-furnishing prevailed long after English supremacy was at an end. The colonial period in furniture outlived the colonial period in history fifty years. When black walnut replaced mahogany and styles became "indigenous," the last vestige of outside influence was over. Then came the decline.

In the accepted definition two centuries of furniture-making are covered, 1620-1820. The first hundred years may be called the age of oak, and the second the age of mahogany. During the earlier period the history of all handicraft in this country was closely allied to that of England and Holland. In the later epoch Dutch influence lessened, and England shared with France the honor of molding taste in America.

The early seventeenth century in England was a time of transition. The Tudor adaptation of the Renaissance was slowly giving way to the Jacobean. Furniture was heavy in every sense of the word and exhibited a combination of styles which bordered on the grotesque. A little leaven of simplicity was sadly needed and this, later in the century, was provided by the Dutch. When William of Orange became king of England, in 1688, the triumph of Dutch designs was com-



OLD CRADLE, BROUGHT OVER IN THE MAYFLOWER, 1620. PILGRIM HALL, PLYMOUTH, MASS.

plete. Holland occupied a unique position commercially. She was in touch with the great nations of the world, and wielded a power second only to that of Italy. Her ports were open to Spain, Portugal, China, and Japan. Via Flanders came French and Italian merchandise. With the accession of William the best that Holland possessed passed into England. Furniture-making was permanently benefited by the introduction of Dutch, Flemish, and Spanish models. In an Anglicized form many of these types reached the colonies. In New England styles in furniture were of tardy growth. In the south, where a closer touch was kept with England, fashions in costumes and in house furnishings changed more rapidly.

Colonial furniture, from the first, showed a variety of types, for the early settlers reproduced as nearly as was possible, in a strange country, the homes of their native

land. The furniture of the Pilgrims was unlike that of the English colonists in the south, and each differed from that of the Dutch settlers. Equally distinct were the household belongings of the Huguenots in Canada, and they in turn were unlike those of the French explorers in Louisiana. The Quaker and Swedish settlers in Pennsylvania added still another element. While the English of the south were fairly representative of one class, and lived after the manner of their kind in the old

EARLY NEW ENGLAND INTERIOR, SHOWING PINE SETTLE

country, there were slight differences between the colonial homes of Virginia and those of Georgia and Carolina. After the roughness of pioneer life passed away the dividing lines between the English and the Dutch, and between the north and the south, became more marked, and remained so until the beginning of the eighteenth century. At that time Manhattan had been for some years under English rule, and the Massachusetts settlers, with increasing prosperity, were enabled to maintain a more comfortable style of living.

The early homes of the Pilgrims and the Puritans were sparsely furnished. The struggle for existence in those first bleak winters made everything but the bare

SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY CHAIRS

necessities impossible. Long settles, built with high backs to shut out the wind, turned chairs of local workmanship, a few chests, plain deal tables, and an occasional arm-chair comprised the furnishings of the main apartment in the usual New England house. The original Mayflower furniture was of the simplest description and extremely meager. Inasmuch as the Mayflower made several voyages between old Plymouth and new Plymouth, and each time returned to America laden with household belongings, it is quite true that a good deal of furniture "came over in the Mayflower," but it did not come on the first passage. In Pilgrim Hall are several pieces which may be considered the genuine Mayflower articles. Peregrine White's rude cradle, Miles Standish's ship chest, and the chairs used by Governor Carver and Elder Brewster are among the relics of that memorable first voyage. The chairs are noteworthy as they represent the earliest type known in New England. They have turned posts and spindles, and are sturdily built. Little used by the Dutch and lightly regarded by the southern planters, this severe type was the common one in the homes of the Plymouth and Bay colonists. Many of the turned chairs were imported, but judging from old inventories, quantities were made in this country.

Among the first trades mentioned in New England records were those of the housewright, the joiner, the carver, and the turner. The list of men who earned their living by furniture-making was a long one. In the Bay colony were John Dix, joiner; William Pettigrew, turner; Increase Allen, carver; Thomas Tarbox, clockmaker; Solomon Andrews, turner; Ebenezer Holworthy, varnisher; Martin Rogers, upholsterer. In 1642 there were twenty joiners in Boston and over thirty turners. In the Plymouth colony Kenelm Wynslow was a prominent furniture-maker and was a registered craftsman in 1634.

Six years after the landing of the Pilgrims a law was passed in which it was declared that "no handicrafts men soever as taylors, shoemakers, carpenters, joiners, smiths, sawyers, or whatsoever, which doe or may reside or belong to the plantation Plimoth, shall use their science or trades at home, or abroad, for any strangers or foreigners, till such time as the colony be served."

The boundless forests of New England supplied workmen with oak, walnut, ash, hickory, cedar, maple, deal, birch, cherry, and pine. Imported furniture was usually of oak, but native pieces were often of the softer woods. Painted furniture formed a large part of the turner's stock in trade. To the heavy coats of paint is due the preservation of many an old-time chest and settle which would otherwise have long since been destroyed.

Contemporary with the turned chair in England was the wainscot chair made of oak, and heavily carved. This chair was too cumbersome for easy transportation, and is not enumerated in the earliest inventories. In Salem, 1638, "2 wainscoate chairs" were among the household effects of Giles Perkins, magistrate; in Boston, 1640, William Pettigrew, turner, advertised "3 wainscoate chairs, with cushions"; and in 1643, Deliverance Mayhew, of Plymouth, bequeathed to her daughter Patience "1 wainscoate chair, 6 turned chairs, and 2 joyned stools."

Less massive than the wainscot chair was the "leather chair" which was of Italian origin. It was introduced into England by the Dutch who obtained it from the Flemings. The Italian model had the spiral supports of the late Renaissance period. The colonial type was substantially built, with turned legs and heavy underbraces. Following closely upon the leather chair came the "turkey chair"—so called from the oriental fabric with which it was upholstered. This was of lighter construction and was designed with a greater regard for comfort. These four styles—turned, wainscot, leather, and turkey—are mentioned over and over in wills and other documents. A Boston inventory of 1668 includes "2 joyned stools, 1 turned chair, 4 turkey-work chairs, 2 deal chests, plain, 1 oaken chest, carved, 3 leather chairs, 1 chest of drawers, cedar, 1 great wainscoate table."

WAINSCOT CHAIR WITH RUSH SEAT

The wainscot table was a combination table and chair. Economy of space, as

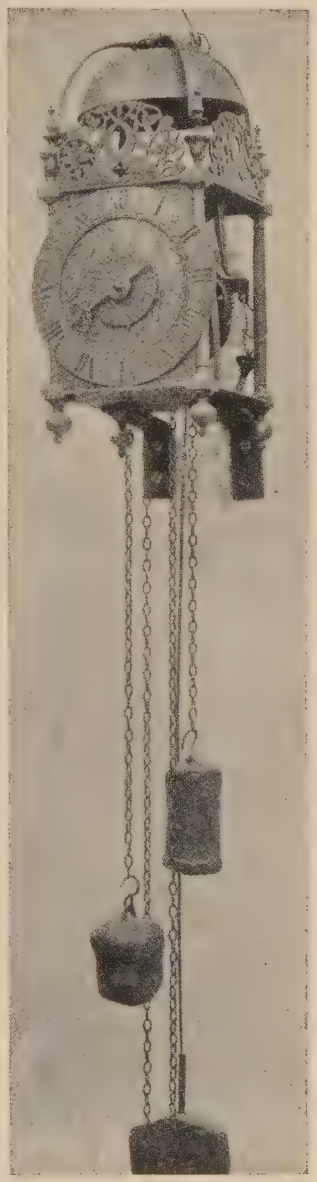
FURNITURE OF THE EARLY EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

well as that of money, was an important factor in early colonial house-furnishing. Similar to the wainscot table was the settle-table, a piece of furniture which served many purposes. When drawn close to the fireside it made a comfortable seat for several people. When the back was lowered and adjusted by means of a wooden bolt it formed a dining-table large enough to accommodate an entire family. Beneath the lid was a convenient storing-place for household linen and for treasured pieces of pewter, too valuable for cupboard or shelf. An additional device provided the settle with candle-holders, which, with the aid of the fire, enabled the sitter to peruse his Bible or almanac. The settle was the most characteristic article of early New England furniture. Local workmen evolved a type which English designers did not surpass. Severe in line and devoid of ornament it was far more beautiful than the imported model. Built of finest oak and carved with rare skill, the old English settle wins our admiration, but does not hold the eye and kindle the imagination as does the simple one of New England pine. What fireside tales the latter suggests! The long winter evening when howling winds accentuated the warmth and cheer within; when blazing logs lighted up dim corners, making gold the ears of yellow corn hanging from the rafters, and transforming the pewter dishes on the dresser into brightest silver! What dreary theological discussions, what long political arguments, what Puritan romances are conjured up by the old pine settle!

For more than a century this primitive piece of furniture held its own against more modern innovations. In reality the colonial settle was simply a long chest with a back to which side pieces were added. The chest in New England passed through many stages of development, some of them quite independent of English influence. A modification of the chest resulted in a low set of drawers. At first one drawer was placed beneath the chest, the whole being elevated on four straight feet. Then a second drawer was added. This piece of furniture was the chest *with* drawers. The next stage was the chest *of* drawers which came into existence about the year 1690. In many cases the straight supports were replaced by heavy ball-feet—the latter having become popular in England. This solid ball foot must not be confounded with the claw-and-ball which was a later design. One evolution of the chest of drawers was the bureau, another was the high-boy, a third the low-boy, and a fourth the beautiful desk of the eighteenth century.

The desks of pioneer colonial days were in reality boxes, known under the various names of "writing-boxes," "desk-boxes," and "paper-boxes." They were almost exclusively the property of clergymen and town clerks. Letter-writing had little part in the busy lives of the New Englanders.

From the many references in early inventories and wills to the furniture of the day, a vivid picture of the living-rooms of the first settlers is presented. The sleeping-rooms of the period are less clearly defined. Little mention is made of the bedstead, although allusions to "feather," "straw," and "flock" beds are numerous. From the massive designs in vogue in England and Holland the colonial bed of the seventeenth century may be conjectured. Few of these heavy structures were imported until after 1650. A plainer piece of furniture, following in general lines the English model, was made in the Plymouth and Bay colonies at an early date.



SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY CLOCK

FLEMISH CHAIR, SALEM, MASSACHUSETTS, LATE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

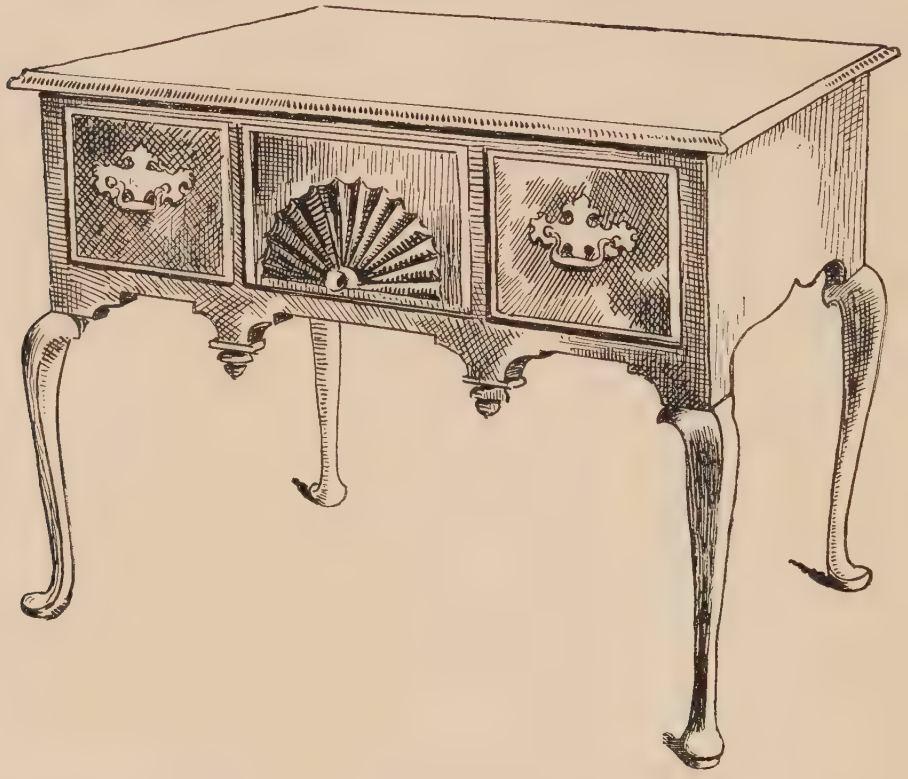
Toward the close of the seventeenth century the bed increased in importance. A list of the household furnishings of a Salem merchant, in 1690, included "1 great oaken bedd, 1 truckle bedd of maple, 1 large sack bottom bedd, 6 Camblett bedd curtains, 2 calicoe bedd curtains, 8 blankett sheets, 1 paire silk bedd curtains." The settee, which was a link between the settle and the sofa, was sometimes used as a bed. This piece of furniture was both of imported and domestic make. The back and seat were usually incased in turkey-work. With the exception of the arms and braces the entire frame was concealed. The construction of the colonial settee was identical with one type of the Renaissance seat. From Italy it passed into France, and from France to England. Holland had no part in its development. From the Italian palace of the sixteenth century to the New England home of the seventeenth was a far-away cry and yet, barring crude workmanship, the colonial bench was a faithful copy of the Renaissance design. The Dutch settlers were unfamiliar with this settee, as they also were with the New England settle. Aside from a few pieces which were typical of the homes of the Pilgrims and Puritans, the Dutch colonists possessed a far greater variety of furniture.

Life in New Netherlands differed essentially from life in New England.

QUEEN ANNE CHAIR, EARLY EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

The winters of Manhattan were milder and the Indians less menacing; but the chief difference between the English colonists of the North and the Dutch settlers lay in their motives for seeking America. The Dutch came to colonize; the English for religious freedom; the Dutch to found a trading-post in the interest of the West India Company; the English, that their children might escape the divine right of kings. The Dutch were a nation of organizers and the Manhattan settlers were equipped with all the necessities of pioneer life. From the first the privations endured by the New Englanders were unknown to them. Their genius for commerce, coupled with their knowledge of seamanship, robbed the long voyage across the Atlantic of half its terrors. Therefore, a close touch was kept with the mother country. Returning vessels brought back Holland bricks and tiles and in a few years New Amsterdam was old Amsterdam in miniature. While Dutch sovereignty extended over a period of less than sixty years, Dutch manners and customs left an impress that a century of English rule could not remove. When New Amsterdam became New York, and Rensselaerswyck became Albany, it was a change of letter, and little else. The English crown was added to the arms of the colony, but the Dutch beaver was not displaced, and the loyal Hollanders still sang *Boven Orange*.

Madam Knight, a Massachusetts traveler visiting Manhattan in 1704, writes in her journal: "The Buildings, Brick generally, are very stately, and high, though not altogether like ours in Boston. The Bricks in some of the Houses are of divers coullers, and laid in checkers, being glazed, and very agreeable. The inside of them is neat to admiration. The fireplaces have no Jambs, as ours have. But the backs



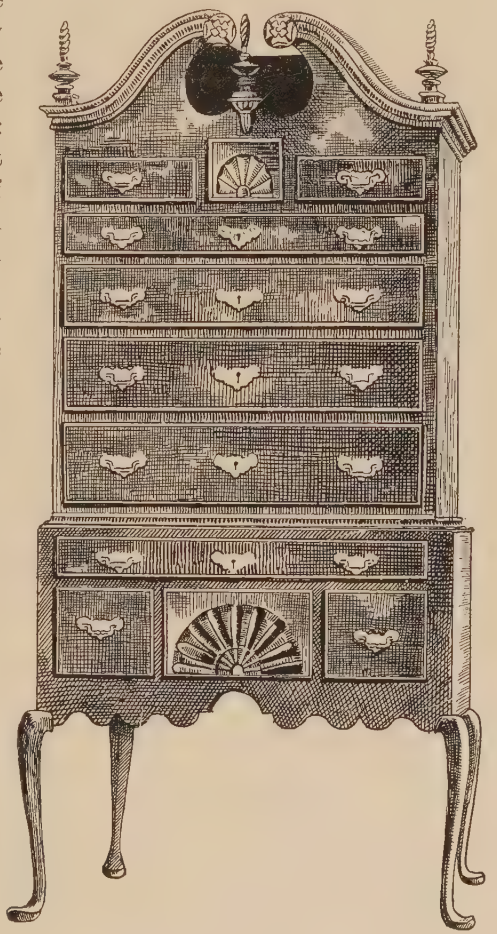
MAHOGANY LOW-BOY WITH CABRIOLE LEG AND CLUB FOOT

run flush with the walls, and the Hearth is of tyles and is as farr out into the Room at the ends as before the fire, which is generally Five foot in the Low'r rooms; and the piece over where the mantel should be is made as ours with joyner's work, and I suppose fastened to iron rodds inside. The hearths are laid with tyles in divers forms and coullers."

The big fore-room of the Dutch dwelling was a pleasant place with its great hearth, its plastered walls, made bright by racks of Delft, and its comfortable, substantial furniture. Chairs there were in several patterns, tables of various designs, long built-in settles, painted and carved chests, and a great assortment of cupboards. Most of these pieces were imported. The trade of the turner and joiner did not flourish in Manhattan as it did in Massachusetts. The close touch kept with Holland made domestic furniture unnecessary. Many of the chests and cupboards were richly carved, some were painted in the bright colors which the Dutch loved so well, others were ornamented with marquetry. The various cup-

boards chronicled in New Amsterdam inventories are bewildering. There were cupboards for linen, for silver, for Delft dishes; cupboards for hats, for cloaks, and for shoes. An important piece of furniture was the kos, or kas, upon which the finest marquetry and carving were lavished. The kas was a huge cupboard, or press, and was the most characteristic article of Dutch handicraft. Ornamented to a high degree, it was often the most sumptuous piece of furniture in the house. When inlaid with tropical woods it presented a brilliant appearance and rivaled a Dutch tulip garden in wealth of color. The kas was handed down from one generation to another, and was carefully recorded in the wills of the period. The widow of Governor Stuyvesant made mention of hers in the following manner: "To my son, Nicoleas, I leave my great kas, or cubbard, standing at the house of Mr. Johnannes Van Brugh, together with all the China earthen ware lock'd up in said cubbard."

This same Johannes Van Brugh presented his daughter Katherine, at the time of her marriage to Philip Livingston, with a superb kas. It has been described by Mrs. John King Van Rensselaer, into whose family it passed by inheritance. "The kas is of oak, and handsomely carved on the outside, and is filled with curiously contrived small drawers and receptacles, and had ample room for the linen and silver of the household of its mistress. The keyhole is concealed under a swing-cover of wood, which, when in place, looks like part of the ornamental carving; and the great iron key, with its crooked wards, seems more fitted to unlock a fortress than a marriage-chest." Katherine Van Brugh Livingston owned the finest dinner-set of Delft in New Amsterdam, numbering more than a hundred peices and doubt-



MAHOGANY HIGH-BOY WITH SCROLL TOP

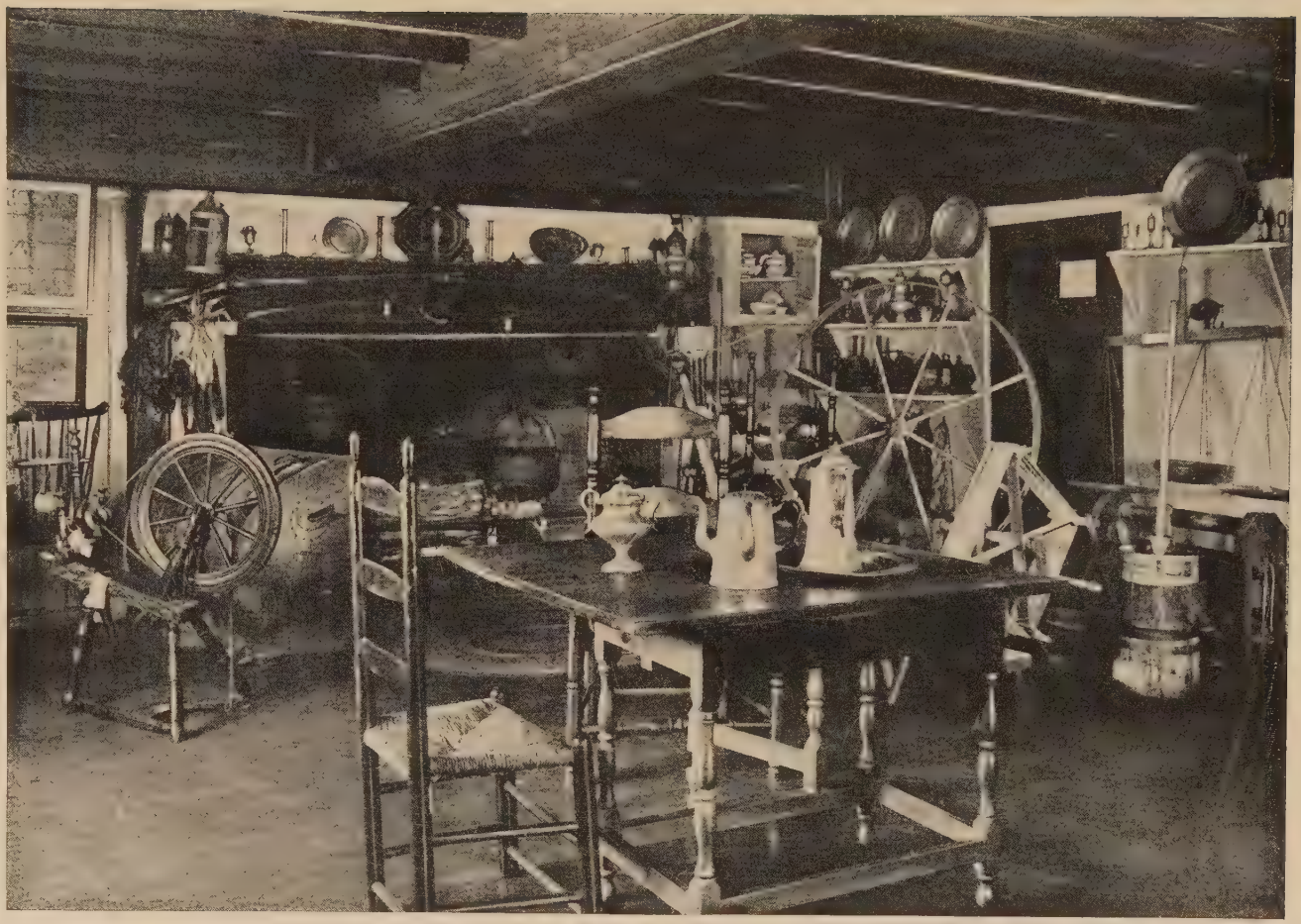
CORNER CUPBOARD WITH SCROLL TOP

less some of the treasured dishes were stored in this great kas.

Typically Dutch was the *slaap-bauck*, or built-in bedstead, one of the few pieces of furniture which was not sent over from Holland. This was usually provided by the builder of the house. When Oloff Van Cortlandt erected a home in the Bowerie for his bride, Annekje Lockermans, it was stipulated in the contract that special care should be taken in making the *slaap-bauck*. In the Cortlandt house, which was one of the most pretentious in town, the *slaap-bauck* was placed in the sitting-room, and was arranged solely for guests who might arrive unexpectedly. It was built behind a sliding door, which concealed it by day, and which could be lowered at night to form a shelf for the mattress. In many houses this simple contrivance was the only provision made for sleeping. The old Dutch *slaap-bauck* was the ancestor of the modern folding-bed.

In the small articles of furniture the homes of Manhattan were particularly rich. Mirrors, clocks, pictures, china ornaments, and candlesticks were ordered directly from Amsterdam. The hanging clocks of brass were among the most beautiful of the importations. The dials were decorated with heraldic devices in color, surmounted by picturesque figures in hammered metal. Holland's extensive foreign trade was shown in the bric-à-brac. The china ornaments, variously referred to as mantel and chimney images, were of East India origin. Interesting bits were lacquers from Japan and ivory carvings from China. These quaint souvenirs of long sea voyages gave color to the Dutch interiors, and emphasized the difference between the homes of New Netherlands and the somber ones of New England.

Pewter played a prominent part in the interiors of Manhattan. Cupboards and racks were filled with bowls and porringers, the latter hanging by their beaten handles in precise rows. Proud was the *Vrouw* of her pewter; prouder of her silver. This was not exposed to the view of any chance visitor. Hidden away in heavy oak chests were the precious pieces—treasured heirlooms handed down from one



KITCHEN OF THE WHIPPLE HOUSE, IPSWICH, MASSACHUSETTS

CHIPPENDALE ROUNDABOUT CHAIR

generation to another. The collection slowly increased, for members of the family were encouraged to put their earnings into silver. The money thus saved was called "silver money," and was sent to Holland when a favorable occasion presented itself. Into the hands of some trustworthy sea-captain it was given, and after many months the little heap of coins returned in the guise of a beeker, a sugar-box, or—perhaps a coffee-urn. Then it was carefully wrapped and put away in the chest, entered in an inventory, and mentioned later in a will, but not brought forth, except to grace a christening or a wedding.

With the coming of the English settlers to Virginia a much more luxurious phase of colonial life came into existence. Under the royal charter land grants were extensive and the estates of the Virginia plantation included miles of territory. Toward the middle of the seventeenth century the home of the southern colonist was one of ease and was closely modeled on that of the English land-owner. Favored by climate, and served by faithful slaves, the problems that confronted the northern colonist were unknown to the Virginia gentleman. Blessed by wealth and education, he had the leisure to cultivate the gentle arts of living.

Land passed from father to son, each in turn adding to the beauty of the estate. American architecture of the seventeenth century reached its height in the mansions of Virginia and her sister colony, Maryland. Old letters and inventories show that these houses were richly furnished. Mention is made of Westover, the home of William Byrd, Esq., with its paneled hall and carved staircase, its dining-room, furnished in oak, and its "faire south parlour," hung in silken curtains of Italian weave. William Byrd possessed a fine library. His book-plate, executed in the Jacobean style, is still preserved.

Robert Carter, of Carotoman, left a host of memoranda concerning his mode of

WASHINGTON'S BEDCHAMBER. MOUNT VERNON

RARE CHIPPENDALE CHAIR

living. The upholstery of his sedan chair, the pattern of his furniture, the designs of his silver, were duly recorded. Thanks to these items a vivid picture is retained of the southern mansion of the seventeenth century. Detailed orders were sent to London merchants, and the newest styles in furniture and table-ware soon found their way across the water.

The carved oak which has been handed down in many Virginia families is of unusual beauty, and of a character unknown in New England. Upholstery was used to a much greater extent in the south than in the north. "Spanish leather, gold Venetian cloth, red Lyons velvet, and green turkey-work" are mentioned in a letter bearing the date 1640. Furniture showed a great variety of designs. Seven kinds of cupboards were listed in the inventory of the Fitz-Hugh house. The court and livery cupboards mentioned so often in colonial documents of the south, and occasionally in those of New England, were carved and paneled in the Jacobean style. The prices for some of these pieces were relatively very high. In 1640 the values were: "One livery cubbard and shelf, £25; A great cupbart, £38 3s."

Another piece of furniture which, in the Puritan house, was of rigid simplicity, was the "thousand-legged table," or "gate table." This was a peculiarly constructed article having many leaves, which were supported by heavily braced legs. In the south this table became quite an ornamental affair. Smaller tables were the "folding," and "drawing" ones, which were similar in design, but less richly carved.

Toward the end of the seventeenth century in England the heavily carved and paneled pieces were replaced by lighter designs. Chairs were built on more graceful lines, tables became less cumbersome, cupboards lost their massive proportions. Furniture was constructed with a greater regard for comfort and utility. The new designs were easy of transportation, and soon influenced woodworkers on this side of the water. The names of the colonial craftsmen had changed. The joiner and the turner and the housewright had become the cabinet-maker, the chair-maker, and the carpenter.

In 1690 the "Handcrafts Guild," of Boston, numbered more than sixty men

BEDCHAMBER, CONTAINING FOUR POSTER AND WING CHAIR

FOUR POSTER, LATE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

who made furniture, and over forty who were engaged in the trade of upholstering. The execution of many of the colonial pieces is of a high order, and bears the test of comparison with English work of the period. American woods were unlike those of England, and this fact makes the origin of most seventeenth century furniture unmistakable. Two extremely interesting pieces introduced into New England between 1680 and 1690 were the so-called Flemish and Spanish chairs. These were seldom copied in this country, and therefore cannot be confused with colonial handiwork.

English furniture-makers obtained the designs from Holland, where they had long been held in favor. The original Spanish chair was upholstered in leather; the legs terminated in hoof-shaped feet, and the underbracing was carved. The Flemish chair had scrolled feet, and the seat and back were of finely woven cane. In being transplanted from one country to another these chairs lost many of their distinctive features. Dutch designers robbed them of some of their grace and English woodworkers added several Jacobean touches. Few Spanish and Flemish chairs of pure type reached America. In England the characteristics of both were blended, and this composite chair was imported in great quantities by both the northern and southern colonists. With Spanish feet, Dutch arms, English back, and Flemish underbracing, its nationality was somewhat puzzling. The Salem chair, illustrated on page 172, is an excellent example of the Flemish type as it is found in this

country. The frame of this old piece has the quality of teak, age having toned the wood to rich, deep brown. Originally the seat of this chair was cane also, the upholstery being added at a later date.

With the discarding of the great cupboards, the elevated chest of drawers, familiarly known as high-boys, came into use. The names "high-boy" and "low-boy" are not found in old furniture annals and are of comparatively late date. "High chests" and "low chests" are frequently mentioned, and it was by these terms that they were known in colonial days. The first high-boys contained from

AMERICAN EMPIRE TABLE

AMERICAN EMPIRE SOFA

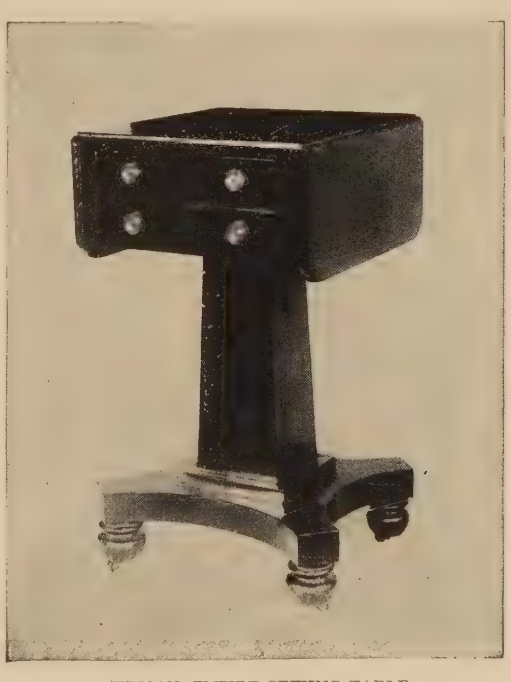
four to six long drawers and four or more divided drawers, all of which opened with brass drop handles. Six turned feet connected by a stretcher formed the supports. The tops were straight, and were finished with a heavy molding. Oak and walnut were the principal woods used in their construction. An idea of their value may be gained from prices gathered from old advertisements. The highest figure is £15, and the lowest £2 10s. There was little change in the construction of the high-boy until about 1720, when the introduction of the cabriole, or bandy-leg, revolutionized this piece of furniture, as it did the chair and the table. Instead of six turned supports, the high chest of drawers rested on four slender ones. The stretcher, in a modified form, remained, but in another decade it was discarded, and the high-boy of 1730 stood on independent feet. The high-boy, page 175, shows the type in use at a slightly later date, when the scroll top was introduced. The drawers display the fan carving destined to be a feature of so many colonial pieces.

Mr. Luke Vincent Lockwood has made a careful study of the high chest of drawers, and in his book, *Colonial Furniture in America* presents a detailed history of its development. Mr. Lockwood has rendered a service to collectors and to all lovers of old furniture, by his scholarly analysis of colonial styles. In speaking of the high-boy, he says: "The chest of drawers proper has usually four drawers, graduating in size from seven to four inches in width; the section above the fourth drawer is divided commonly into five drawers; a deep one, ornamented with the rising sun, with the space each side of this equally divided into small drawers. The table part has a drawer running all the way across the top, and under this three deep drawers, the center one also having the rising sun. The large majority of low-boys offered for sale are the lower or table part of the high-boys,

and can be distinguished from the table proper by their height and the more substantial make of the leg. The genuine low-boy seldom mentions measures over 34 inches in height; the high-boy tables average about 38 inches. The little low-boys, to the trained eye, are easily distinguished from the pieces made by supplying a top to the high-boy table. It may also be added, that when they are thus separated, the chest of drawers is often finished with feet, and offered for sale as a colonial bureau."

A variation of the usual high-boy of 1730 was the type with a blocked front. This style is rarely found to-day, but the blocked desks which are of later date, convey an idea of the general arrangement of the drawers. With the appearance of the scroll top, or broken cornice, the high-boy entered the third period of its development. The scroll top was the dividing line between old and new forms. It transformed the high-boy into a thing of beauty; it added lightness and grace to the cupboard, and it wrought a wonderful change in the desk. Contemporary with the scroll top were the delicately carved finials and the finely executed brass handles.

The tall clock, no less than the high-boy, was improved by the scroll. When cabinet-makers discarded the straight cornice, clock-makers followed in their footsteps. Clock-making in the colonies forms a chapter by itself. The earliest time-pieces were portable, and were of English make. Hanging clocks, described in old documents as "lantern" and "chamber," were little known in New England until the late seventeenth century. When tall clocks replaced them, the field for beautiful cabinet-work was a wide one. The craft of the "clock man" in the colonies developed slowly. People of means imported their timekeepers; those in humble circumstances depended on the hour-glass and the sun-dial. The eighteenth century was almost at an end before American clock-making reached the dignity of an art. The names of Seth Thomas and Aaron Willard came into prominence about the year 1800. The "banjo" clock was made by Willard, and was very popular in the early



AMERICAN EMPIRE SEWING-TABLE

nineteenth century. Chauncey Jerome, at a later date, made the rectangular shelf-clock, which is a faithful timekeeper to-day in many Connecticut houses.

The year 1720 which ended the first hundred years of furniture-making in the colonies, was an important date in England. About that time mahogany came into use in London. The introduction of this wood has long been credited to Dr. Gibbon, an English physician, the story of which has been related in Chapter XII.

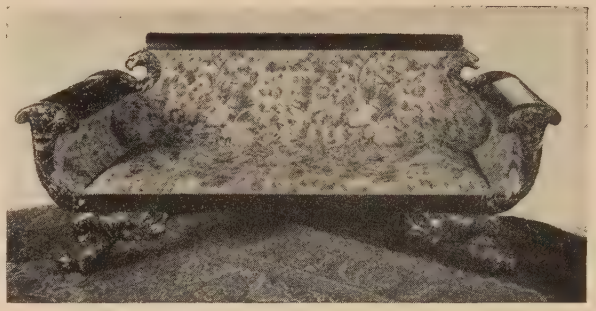
That mahogany furniture was in limited use in the colonies before 1720 is now placed beyond a doubt. In the will of John Jones of Philadelphia, 1708, a mahogany screen is mentioned, and in a New York advertisement, of similar date, a mahogany chest of drawers is offered for sale. The truth of the Gibbon story is open to question, although it is probable that mahogany furniture was little known in England before the second decade of the eighteenth century. It was not imported to any great extent in this country until after the year 1740. Without mahogany the cabriole-legged desks and secretaries, the carved four-post bedsteads, and the graceful fiddle-back chairs would not have reached a high degree of beauty. Chair-making, especially, was revolutionized by the introduction of this West India wood.

About the year 1730 "the fiddle-back chair," sometimes called "the Queen Anne," sometimes "the Dutch," and again, "the bandy-legged," became popular in the colonies. It formed an important link in the history of chair-making and marked the dividing-line between the heavily braced types, so long in vogue, and the delicately constructed styles made famous by the late Georgian furniture-makers. The first Queen Anne chairs imported into New England were made with slight underbraces, but in the second style these were lacking. The distinctive characteristics of the Queen Anne patterns were the cabriole leg, terminating in the flat or club foot, the broad splat of the back, and the depressed seat. A fine specimen of the second type is reproduced on page 173. This is pure "Fiddle-Back".

Contemporary with the Queen Anne chairs were the "slat-back" and "banister-back" chairs. These were made with seats of rush, and were very plentiful between the years 1730 and 1750. In the kitchen of the Whipple house which is illustrated on page 177, are two of the "slat-back" designs. Into this old kitchen have been gathered many articles typical of colonial days. The collection of flax-wheels, churns, lanterns, candlesticks, and pewter dishes rivals that of many a New England museum. A "thousand-legged table" is here, and in a shadowy corner may be seen a "fan-back" Windsor chair. Quite apart from the other chairs of colonial days were the many styles of "Windsors." From 1725 until early in the nineteenth century they held their own with far more elegant designs. They were found in the homes of rich and poor and were not confined to any one locality.

The original Windsors were of English make, but American furniture-makers perfected several styles. Made of ash and hickory and heavily coated with paint,

COLONIAL PARLOR, CONNECTCTICUT BUILDING, LOUISIANA PURCHASE EXPOSITION



AMERICAN EMPIRE SOFA

they have outlived many a fine bit of carved mahogany. The various American Windsors were known as "round-backs," "fan-backs," and "bow-backs," the latter following in a general way the lines of an archer's bow. There were "arm-chairs," "rocking-chairs," "writing-chairs," and "side-chairs" in the almost endless Windsor category. One of the sturdy "arm-chairs" may be seen in Washington's bedchamber, at Mt. Vernon, which is reproduced in this chapter.

The year 1760 marked another stage in the history of furniture-making in the colonies. In England the great epoch of cabinet-making was at hand—that brilliant period, covering less than fifty years, with which the names of Chippendale, Hepplewhite, and Sheraton are inseparably associated. Shearer, Ince, Mayhew, Manwaring, and Richardson were worthy followers of the three masters, but their influence was little felt in America. How many of the Chippendale, Hepplewhite, and Sheraton pieces found in this country actually came from the hands of the great designers? Their names have become generic terms, sometimes denoting a style, sometimes a period. "After the manner of" Chippendale, or Hepplewhite, or Sheraton would be a safer way to classify most of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century furniture found in America. Doubtless a great deal of the work in England which now bears the names of these men was designed by them and executed by others. In this country English models were so carefully copied that it sometimes is difficult to locate the makers. Chippendale's influence was strongest in America between the years 1760-1780. During the latter decade, Hepplewhite was also a potent factor in determining styles in furniture. Sheraton's publication, *The Cabinet-Maker and Upholsterer's Drawing Book*, appeared in 1793. From that date until the designs of the Empire came into fashion, Sheraton was the guiding-star of the furniture-makers in America.

Fortunately the popularity of Chippendale's Chinese and Gothic styles found little echo on this side of the Atlantic. Most of the pieces bearing his name in America are entirely free from these absurdities. His early furniture shows traces of Dutch influence which lingered in England in spite of newer fashions. He made use of the bandy-legged chair, imparting great delicacy to the construction. The

COLONIAL DINING-ROOM, CONNECTICUT BUILDING, LOUISIANA PURCHASE EXPOSITION
AMERICAN EMPIRE TABLE, CHIPPENDALE CHAIRS

first Chippendale chairs which were known in America were made with the bandy-leg and ball-and-claw foot. The backs were a variation of the Dutch splat, pierced and slightly curving. The next type imported showed a more elaborate back, and straight, tapering legs. About 1770 a slight departure from the regulation Chippendale chair resulted in the "ladder-back" design. The supports of this chair were straight, and the back was divided with horizontal bars. Mt. Vernon contains several of these patterns. In the West Parlor, shown in the frontispiece, a ladder-back chair is placed on either side of the fine Louis XVI *fauteuil.*

Many of the "roundabout" chairs designed by Chippendale are admirably constructed. In his hands the heavy Dutch model, the original "roundabout," was given a new beauty. The large upholstered chairs of the late colonial period, the "wing" and "cozy" styles were not made by Chippendale. Ince and Manwaring designed several patterns, which were more common in England than in this country. An American type of wing chair is shown on page 181.

Thomas Sheraton made many chairs and tables, but in this country his fame rests chiefly on his sideboards. The urn-shaped knife-boxes which are a part of many of these pieces, show how strongly he was guided by the standards of the Adam brothers. Most of Sheraton's work in this country is of a high order. To many minds the old furniture which bears his name is the finest of all colonial styles.

Four famous colonial chairs are illustrated here. First, the Flemish type; second, the pure fiddle-back; third, the Windsor; and fourth the chintz-covered "wing." There were several modifications of these types, but they were merely in detail.

After the War of 1812 English patterns declined in favor and furniture-makers turned to France for inspiration. The American development of the Empire style is a lasting credit to the designers of this country, and forms a fitting close to the second century of colonial furniture-making. The table and sofa, pages 183 and 184, are typical examples of the American Empire and show what spirit could be imparted to massive designs.

While the Empire style in America followed in a general way the trend of the movement in France, it was free from the incongruities which marred many of the foreign pieces. Carved columns, claw-feet, pine-apple finials, and ornamental brasses were the hall-marks of the American Empire. Realistic heads of lions and griffins, and the many Egyptian details to which French furniture-makers resorted, were happily absent from the work of the day on this side of the water.

By 1830 the Empire style in this country had run its course. Designs lost their vitality and became heavy and ponderous. When black walnut superseded mahogany the characteristics which had made furniture-making an art for more

than a hundred years ceased to exist. Varied as were colonial types there were certain features common to all. Whatever extravagances marked English and continental styles, designs in this country leaned toward simplicity. It is this quality that renders colonial furniture as satisfactory to-day as when it came from the hands of its maker.

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